

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS

**GOAL:** *Maintain and create the best possible residential neighborhoods that are safe and served by a good multi-modal circulation system.*

#### POLICIES

1. Review existing neighborhood plans upon adoption of this Plan to ensure they reflect current conditions, goals and policies.
2. Develop new neighborhood plans that replace existing plans if it is determined to be appropriate.
3. Develop appropriate mechanisms so that priorities and concerns of neighborhoods are communicated and understood by City government.
4. Promote and facilitate strong neighborhood associations, establish proactive neighborhood advocacy programs, promote communication between neighborhoods, develop neighborhood recreation programs.
5. Maintain or expand open areas/parks.
6. Establish neighborhood linkages with access to shopping, services, etc.
7. Create infill open space when possible.
8. Develop neighborhood walkways that are: safe, continuous, lighted, and that connect neighbors, neighborhoods, the Town Center, work places, schools, shopping centers, parks and public transit.
9. Implement Rockville's Bicycle Master Plan to provide recreational and commuter opportunities.

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on each neighborhood planning area and outlines the most important issues facing each area. The depth of the examination is limited, partly because the emphasis of this document is on overall community issues. However, it is important to identify the individual residential planning areas that make up the City, acknowledge the distinctive identity of each neighborhood, and evaluate special conditions that may require additional study. Planning areas that are not primarily residential are not included in this chapter and are covered in other sections of this plan.

Although residents identify the City of Rockville as their home, their most important identification is often with their individual neighborhoods. In 1982, the City was divided into a series of 18 neighborhood planning areas, each representing a distinct area that contains most, if not all, of the following elements:

- A sense of community tied together by history, place, identity, age, architecture, location, or subdivision;
- A relatively homogeneous land use pattern with compatible zoning;
- Clearly definable natural and constructed boundaries (streams, railroad tracks, major highways, etc.);

- A land area undivided by major highways;
- A neighborhood convenience shopping area located either within or immediately adjacent to the neighborhood;
- An area approximately equal in size to all other neighborhood planning areas;
- Identifiable neighborhood parks or playgrounds;
- An area served by a local elementary school; and
- An area containing definable census tracts.

The residential planning areas with the date of the neighborhood plan in parenthesis are:

Planning Area 2/Croydon Park (1982);  
Planning Area 3/Hungerford, Stoneridge, New Mark Commons (1985);  
Planning Area 4/West End/Woodley Gardens East-West (1989);  
Planning Area 5/Woodley Gardens and College Gardens;  
Planning Area 6/Lincoln Park (1984);  
Planning Area 7/Twinbrook Forest and Northeast Rockville;  
Planning Area 8/Twinbrook (1982);  
Planning area 10/Montrose;  
Planning Area 11/North Farm;  
Planning Area 13/Orchard Ridge, Potomac Woods, Falls Ridge;  
Planning Area 14/Rockshire and Fallsmead  
Planning Area 17/King Farm  
Planning Area 18/Fallsgrove

In general, plans were prepared for areas that encompassed neighborhoods that were the oldest in the City and where there were concerns about impacts from the opening of Metro stations. Because of the limited focus area, the neighborhood plans had more detailed recommendations than a typical master plan would have and were adopted into the 1993 *Master Plan* by reference. Many of the recommendations listed in the plans have been implemented.

Every neighborhood experiences change over time. Changes occur in the composition of the housing stock and in the age, income, race, and ethnicity of neighborhood residents. It is important to anticipate and respond to any potential problems that will occur as change occurs. In many of Rockville's newer neighborhoods, few land use changes are proposed or anticipated over the 20-year time span of this plan because of the lack of developable land.

Some neighborhoods have existing neighborhood plans that were adopted in response to threats from within or adjacent to the neighborhood that would significantly impact the quality of life in the community. These neighborhood plans provide more detailed recommendations than would be afforded by a general Master Plan, and can include land use, transportation and policies to address issues specific to a neighborhood.

Due to the amount of time that has passed since most residential neighborhood plans were adopted, the Plan recommends that all existing neighborhood plans be reviewed to ensure the neighborhood vision is still appropriate. This may result in updates to Plans, new Neighborhood Plans being developed, or Plans being developed where there are currently no neighborhood plans.

The *Imagine Rockville* process in 1996 identified the vision for the neighborhoods as being “To empower our neighborhoods, to enhance and maintain the quality of community life for all.” In order to implement the vision, the following goals were articulated:

1. Promote and facilitate strong neighborhood associations, establish proactive neighborhood advocacy programs, promote communication between neighborhoods, develop neighborhood recreation programs.
2. Develop neighborhood walkways that are: safe, continuous, and lighted. Connecting neighborhoods, city center, work places, schools, shopping centers, parks, [and] public transit. [sic]
3. To ensure Rockville’s Bike Plan is responsive to neighborhood needs and provides recreational and commuter opportunities.
4. To promote policies and practices that are non-discriminatory in the rental side of housing stock, that preserve neighborhoods, recognize historical significance, encourage affordable and accessible housing, and that consider the impact of land use.

There are well-organized civic associations in most Rockville neighborhoods, and active citizens work hard to ensure that a high quality of life is maintained in each small area. The Neighborhood Resource Coordinator Program has been developed by Rockville to facilitate communication between the city and individual citizens and/or civic associations and to assist in solving neighborhood concerns. This contributes to the overall high quality of life in the city.

In the 1993 Master Plan, planning issues included internal and external pressures on neighborhood stability and the quality of life in residential planning areas. For the Planning Commission critical issues were the appropriateness of infill development on vacant lots and the possible re-subdivision of lots changing the character of the neighborhood. Consequently, this issue was examined for each neighborhood planning area. Other common issues include proximity to concentrations of nonresidential uses, especially industrial areas, non-local traffic traveling on residential streets, and the presence or concentrations of institutional and special exception uses. However, not all neighborhoods experienced every issue.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Residential Infill Issues**

Residential infill development can occur in a variety of ways. There are existing vacant lots that were part of the original subdivision but not built upon for a variety of reasons. Large undeveloped properties can undergo the traditional subdivision process into multiple residential lots or be developed as a Comprehensive Planned Development (CPD) if the site meets certain requirements. CPDs are an attempt to incorporate residential uses with a variety of commercial, office, or low intensity industrial uses in a planned, integrated fashion. Examples of CPDs are Tower Oaks, King Farm, and Fallsgrove.

There are other lots within an older subdivision that may be large enough to be subdivided into two or three lots according to the area and frontage requirements of the city’s current zoning regulations. There are also lots that may only have enough frontage on an existing street to be subdivided into a “pipe stem” lot. This type of property division has a 20’ wide strip of property fronting upon an existing street that leads to an area to the back of the existing lot that meets the existing area requirements for zoning.

Rockville's subdivision regulations have a provision that mandates that a resubdivision maintain the average area and frontage of existing lots within 500 feet "to the extent possible." While this does not prohibit pipestem lots even if there is no other pipestem lot within 500 feet of the proposed lot, it does make it less likely.

According to the Smart Growth theory, it is more desirable to locate infill development located in an existing neighborhood that is considered to be a "Priority Funding Area" than construct a new subdivision outside of the funding area. In order to encourage this infill development, state infrastructure funding is to be directed mainly to "Priority Funding Areas" that are within the Washington urban ring and/or development corridors. All of the City of Rockville is considered to be a "Priority Funding Area."

The booklet *Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Initiatives* published by the Maryland Office of Planning has a minimum standard of 2.0-3.5 units per acre for areas having sewer and water service and designated as a "Priority Funding Area." The majority of developed residential areas in Rockville meet this minimum requirement.

With the exception of the critical parcels listed in the Land Use Chapter, there are only three planning areas that have more than a few vacant lots or potential for re-subdivision of existing lots into one or more full (side by side) lots or pipe stem lots. These are the East Rockville, Lincoln Park, and the West End planning areas.

Lincoln Park has a number of vacant lots that are very long and have more area than currently required in the R-60 zone but are only 50 feet wide. Consequently, the individual lots could only be developed as one house lot which would be in keeping with the original neighborhood concept and not too different than the current zoning requirements. East Rockville has a similar situation. However, there are a limited number that could possibly be re-subdivided where additional homes could be built. The 1993 Master Plan encouraged infill development as a primary method of increasing the number of homes in the city. While infill development is permitted, the number of homes that can be built has been reduced due to infill development in the 1990s. With this growth, there has been an increased concern about the impacts of infill development.

The character of potential residential infill is also a concern for some residents. For instance, some felt that the construction of a very large house in an area of small ramblers would be out of scale with the existing neighborhood. The use of guidelines to restrict the size of infill housing below the sizes permitted under the zoning regulations was discussed during the development of the Master Plan. This plan recommends that the standards of the Zoning Ordinance continue to control infill development and additions to existing houses. Some of the newer subdivisions have deed restrictions that require the homeowner association's (or comparable group) approval of additions and accessory structures. Many of Rockville's neighborhoods developed over a long period of time and have a wide variety of housing styles, sizes and relationships to the street. Others developed with the same house style or a limited variety of house styles. Over time, many structures have had various additions, changes in siding material, or new windows or doors. Some of these changes have added architectural interest to the neighborhood; some have been less than compatible with other homes in the neighborhood. Zoning restrictions are very general and only cover building setbacks, building height, and lot coverage. Unless a property is within a designated local historic district, it is difficult to regulate the style of an individual house design or an addition to the structure.

## **Recommendations**

1. Develop vacant lots in accordance with current zoning requirements for the property.
2. Change the Zoning Ordinance to clarify resubdivision procedures for infill housing.

## **Maintenance**

A critical issue in some of Rockville's neighborhoods is how to maintain neighborhood stability and maintenance of the older neighborhoods. Certain planning areas have concentrations of aging housing stock and low-income, aging or elderly residents who may need financial assistance to upgrade deteriorating housing. Maintenance of the City's housing stock is covered in the Housing Chapter. However, it is extremely important that the city maintain its infrastructure especially in older neighborhoods. Pavement, curbs, sidewalks, storm drainage facilities, street trees, and parks need to be kept in good repair refurbished and/or replaced as necessary. This is part of a comprehensive community enhancement program.

## **Recommendations**

1. Continue to enforce the standards in the Property Maintenance Code.
2. Continue funding for timely infrastructure replacement programs replacement programs within residential neighborhoods.

## **Institutional Uses**

Institutional uses include private and public educational facilities, child care centers, nursing homes, and places of worship. Under current zoning regulations, most institutional uses require a Special Exception in residential zones.

Some institutional uses serve only the neighborhood in which they are located. However, increasingly, many institutions are drawing members or clients from a wide area. Most institutional uses are beneficial to the entire community. However, some uses can be disruptive to the adjoining residential property owners. Generally, the disruption depends upon the size of the site that the institution is located, available on-site parking, and the width and location of buffers for the site. The hours of operation are also very important. For facilities that operate 24 hours a day, a car door closing at 1:00 a.m. is more disruptive than the one closing at 1:00 p.m. because it is generally quieter late at night/early in the morning and most people are trying to sleep.

Increased traffic during the hours of operation and parking on residential streets can also be intrusive for the neighborhood. For instance, institutional uses (which are permitted uses) may not have had buffered parking lots. Traffic and off-site parking during operating hours is increased, while non-residents may not be cognizant of neighborhood traffic patterns or concerns. Other institutional uses may cause similar traffic problems at peak times. And, many institutional uses are now operating throughout the week with daycare and various outreach programs, some of which require special exceptions.

When allowing an institutional use in a residential neighborhood, care needs to be taken to ensure that the use is not disruptive to the adjoining property owners.

## **Adjacent Commercial/Industrial Uses**

In general, most of the residential neighborhoods are insulated from the large commercial or industrial areas. However, it is important to maintain buffers between the commercial site and adjoining residential properties and to ensure that the commercial properties are free of debris and trash. Aging small-scale neighborhood centers can also be a problem if the building(s) are not generating enough income to support a remodeling or if the property owner is unwilling to upgrade the property. Vigilant and frequent commercial and industrial property inspections are critical for property maintenance code and zoning compliance, especially in areas immediately adjacent to residential properties.

## **Recommendations**

1. Provide incentives to encourage a commercial/industrial property owner to upgrade the property if the property is adjacent to a residential neighborhood if feasible
2. Utilize community funds to install additional landscaping in the right-of-way to minimize the impact of on-site parking or utilitarian architecture where feasible.
3. Evaluate the Town Center Master Plan's recommendations for North Stonestreet Avenue through a neighborhood-based review of the industrial area and surrounding neighborhoods in Lincoln Park and East Rockville.
4. Increase the current level of zoning/property maintenance enforcement for commercial and industrial properties.

## **Cut-through Traffic**

Many of the newer residential neighborhoods in Rockville are typically designed with curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Since there are only a few entrances/exits to a neighborhood off a major thoroughfare, cut-through traffic is minimal. Traffic is generally confined to those living in the neighborhood or guests. However, traffic backups can occur at these entrances/exits as residents leave the neighborhood. As traffic volumes increase on major roads, traffic lights may need to be installed in order for neighborhood residents to exit safely.

The older neighborhoods, as well as King Farm and Falls Grove are designed with a grid street pattern with multiple connections to major thoroughfares. This facilitates the utilization of alternate traffic routes by residents from within and outside of the neighborhood. While this is positive from a traffic pattern standpoint, the result can be cut-through traffic that disrupts the residential character of neighborhood because of its volume and/or excessive speed. Common measures to reduce cut-through traffic are "no-entrance" signs and speed humps. Although speed humps do slow down general traffic, they also slow down emergency vehicles and are noisy when utilitarian trucks bounce cargo as they go over the hump.

The Transportation Chapter discusses general City-wide transportation issues. Consequently, specific transportation recommendations are not addressed within the individual Neighborhood Planning Areas.

**Recommendations**

1. Continue to monitor traffic patterns within neighborhoods.
2. Respond to increases in traffic with appropriate traffic control and/or calming measures

**NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS**

The following sections examine each residential neighborhood and include the history and current development status of each. Commercial centers serving each neighborhood are also discussed as well as the existence of parks, major public facilities, and institutions within each planning area.

## PLANNING AREA 2

### EAST ROCKVILLE

#### INTRODUCTION

East Rockville (Planning Area 2) is located in the northeastern section of Rockville. Its northern boundary includes the residential properties along both sides of Howard Avenue (adjacent to the Lincoln Park neighborhood). The planning area's eastern boundary is along First Street (Route 28) and Norbeck Road. A change in the planning area boundary has been made to include Maryvale School and the subdivisions located on the western side of Norbeck Road since Route 28 is now a logical boundary between Planning Area 2 and Planning Area 7. Its western boundary is behind (west side) the industrial properties on North Stonestreet Avenue and along the east side of South Stonestreet Avenue as it joins Route 28 to the south.



A neighborhood plan for what was known as the Croydon Park Planning Area was completed in 1982 and the *Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan Revisited* was prepared in 1986, a year after the Metro Station was completed. The primary concern in 1982 was to maintain the single-family residential character of the neighborhood, buffer nearby industrial areas, and limit through-traffic. The 1986 plan evaluated progress on the recommendations in the 1982 plan and anticipated traffic and parking problems from the Metro Station. By 1986, many of

the recommendations of the 1982 plan had been implemented, and the anticipated cut-through traffic problems had not materialized.

#### History

The earliest subdivision within the neighborhood was the Rockville Park subdivision, which is centered along Baltimore Road. England's Second Addition followed and was annexed in 1884. Other areas of Croydon Park were annexed in 1896 and in the "Mass" Annexations of 1949.

#### Current Conditions

East Rockville is a residential neighborhood that consists primarily of single-family homes. The majority of the neighborhood is zoned R-60 with the exception of a few isolated small commercial properties. Historic homes dating from the late 1800s line Baltimore Road, but the majority of houses were built beginning in the 1940s. These were houses developed for the building boom that occurred after World War II. A small townhouse development was constructed in the 1980s along Charles Street on the site of the demolished "Old" Maryvale School.

There are two neighborhood commercial centers, zoned C-1, within the planning area. One is on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and North Horners Lane. The other is on the corner of



South Stonestreet Avenue and Reading Avenue. Both serve local neighborhood needs with small convenience stores.

There are three small parks within the planning area totaling nine acres. Maryvale Park is the largest with 7.5 acres devoted to playing courts, a park shelter, restrooms, picnic tables and benches. It also contains a small forest preserve area.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

There are a number of vacant lots scattered throughout the neighborhood. None are clustered together on one street with the exception of a few “side-by-side” lots. Some of the vacant lots are very long and have enough acreage for re-subdivision, but they are too narrow to meet the zoning regulations for subdivision into pipe stem lots.

### **Adjacent Industrial Areas**

Although there are no industrial areas within the planning area, North Stonestreet Avenue and South Stonestreet Avenue are two of the main gateways for the neighborhood, and these streets do support industrial uses. The number one policy statement in the 1986 plan was “Protect Croydon Park and its environs from commercial, industrial or incompatible residential encroachment.” There are only four industrial (I-1) buildings along South Stonestreet Avenue which have little room for expansion. However, the maintenance (or lack thereof) of all of the current industrial sites and the overall streetscape affects the adjacent neighborhood. In addition, the expected expansion of the Metro site could have a profound effect on the neighborhood in terms of visibility, increased population, and increased traffic. (See the Town Center Master Plan)

The property owner of 111 England Terrace requested that this property be reviewed for a zone change from R-60 to I-1 during the Master Plan process. There are residential homes located across from and to the east side of the property. To the west is a property that is zoned I-1 with access off North Stonestreet Avenue. Although 111 England Terrace is adjacent to an industrial use, other adjacent properties are zoned R-60 and part of a well-kept residential neighborhood. In the past, the City removed a portion of the paving on England Terrace, thereby eliminating the direct connection to North Stonestreet Avenue in order to discourage business-related traffic from using residential streets. Consequently, if the zoning were changed, business access to 111 England Terrace would be along residential streets. Consequently, this property is not recommended for a zoning change.

### **Traffic Issues**

Croydon Park and Lincoln Park were the neighborhoods most affected by the construction of the Rockville Metro Station in terms of traffic circulation. A number of direct routes across the railroad tracts to Route 355 were eliminated. Consequently, residents from both neighborhoods reach Route 355 by either Park Road or Veirs Mill Road. Various other streets provide the primary routes to these major roads. Baltimore Road, North Horners Lane, North Stonestreet Avenue, and South Stonestreet Avenue are primary circulation routes for both

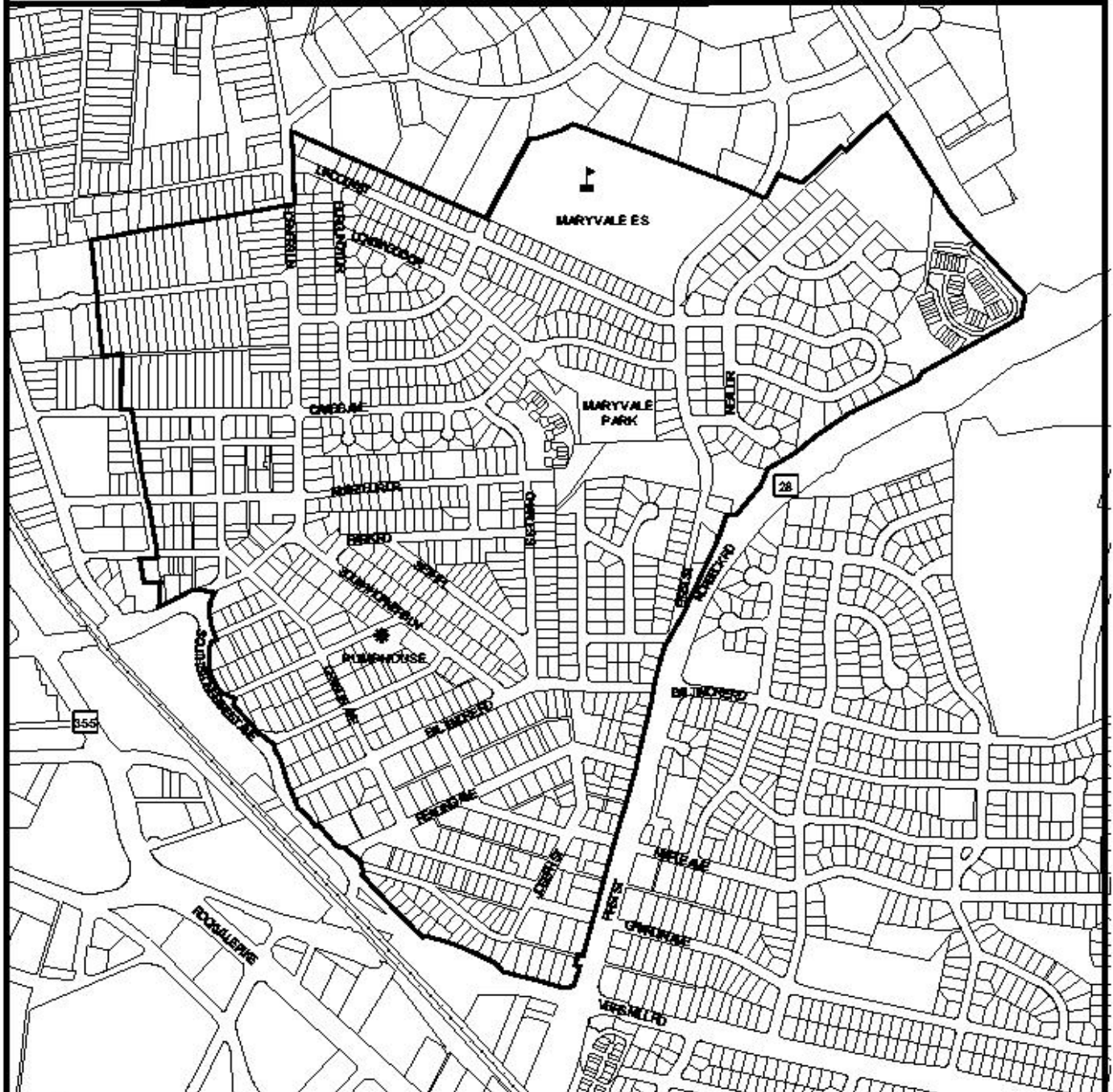
the industries and residences located on them as well as for the entire neighborhood. In addition, traffic from the industrial areas along Gude Drive, Dover Road, and Southlawn Lane often utilize these streets. Neighborhood residents have complained about the increase of general traffic, truck traffic, and excessive speed on local streets. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

### **Recommendations**

1. Maintain the R-60 zone for the neighborhood.
2. Explore the possibility of adjusting the zoning regulations in an updated neighborhood plan to allow lots along alleys or undeveloped City right-of-ways to be resubdivided
3. Evaluate the appropriateness of existing zoning in portions of the Planning Area near Metro through an amendment to the 1982 Croydon Park Neighborhood Plan to address modifications that may be made in the adjacent portions of the Town Center Master Plan Area. Insure that aesthetic issues are addressed and adequate buffers be created between any future Metro, industrial, commercial, or office expansion and the planning area.
4. Ensure that the sides of the Metro site facing Park Road and South Stonestreet Avenue are treated with architectural details and other buffering methods to reduce the obtrusiveness of any structure on the Metro site.
5. Maintain adequate inspection services personnel in order to investigate complaints about inadequate maintenance of residential, institutional, commercial and/or industrial properties and enforce the City's regulations.



## PLANNING AREA 2 EAST ROCKVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD



 **Planning Area Boundary**



## PLANNING AREA 3

### HUNGERFORD, LYNFIELD AND NEW MARK COMMONS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### History and Current Conditions

The Hungerford, Lynfield and New Mark Commons Neighborhood (Planning Area 3) are among several neighborhood planning areas that are adjacent to the Town Center. The planning area is located south of the Town Center between Maryland Avenue and Jefferson Street and north of Wootton Parkway. A Neighborhood Plan for the area was adopted in 1985. The planning area consists of 426 acres of land, and most of the area was annexed by Rockville in 1949. The 1985 Plan identified three subareas: the Monroe-Lynfield Neighborhood, the Hungerford-Stoneridge Neighborhood, and New Mark Commons. In addition, there are new townhouses on Waddington Court, and there are two new residential developments along Wootton Parkway.

The Monroe-Lynfield section is the oldest neighborhood in the area. It includes the Fireside Apartments on Monroe Street, extends along Monroe Street to Mount Vernon Place, and includes the properties on Lynfield Drive West. It contains a mixture of single-family homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings. Most were built between 1947 and 1960. The zoning is R-20, R-30, and multi-family residential. Although outside of the planning area, Richard Montgomery High School and its maintenance building abut the neighborhood on Mount Vernon Place. The school is scheduled for reconstruction to be completed in fiscal year 2005.

The Hungerford and Stoneridge subdivisions consist predominantly of single-family houses and was developed in the 1950s and 1960s. It is zoned R-60. It forms the largest neighborhood in the planning area and contains over 650 single family detached homes, with no institutional and business uses within the area.

New Mark Commons was built in the 1960s and 1970s and is an early example of the Planned Residential Unit (PRU) development. PRU regulations encourage a mix of housing types in a single development with common open space and recreational amenities. The housing mix at New Mark Commons includes townhouses and single family houses. The development's open space includes a small lake and wooded walking trails. There is also a privately owned clubhouse and swimming pool for the residents.



There are three parks within the area totaling 55.3 acres (13% of the land). Dogwood Park is 40.6 acres and provides for a variety of playing fields, play equipment, a park shelter, restrooms, and parking as well as a forest preserve and an urban wildlife sanctuary. The playing fields are used extensively by recreational leagues. There are neighborhood concerns about noise, light, and traffic from this use. A field adjacent to Cabin John Parkway is used informally as a recreation space. The neighborhood supports maintaining this field as

surrounding areas are reforested. Dawson Farm Park is 7.2 acres and includes a 1912 farmhouse that serves as a group home. The park is adjacent to a privately owned farmhouse that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The park contains play equipment and pathways. It is also designated as a forest preserve and urban wildlife sanctuary. Elwood Smith Park and Community Center, the only gathering place for the community, is located on 7.5 acres of land and provides a baseball field, a basketball court, picnic tables, grills, and a bike trail. Although technically not in the planning area, Monument Park is located across the street from New Mark Commons and is connected to the development by an underground tunnel. This park also provides playing fields, courts, and play equipment. In addition to park facilities, the Hungerford Stoneridge Forest Preserve and City Stormwater Management Pond at the end of Cabin John Parkway buffer the neighborhood from Wootton Parkway.

The Potomac Valley Nursing and Wellness Center is located within the planning area as is the Child Resource Center, which is located in the former Hungerford Elementary School building. Julius West Middle School and Richard Montgomery High School are located just outside the planning area. There are no retail centers within the planning area. However, the Wintergreen Shopping Center, Ritchie Center, stores on Rockville Pike, and stores in the Town Center are close to the planning area.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

Since identified in the 1985 Plan, most of the infill lots have been developed within the planning area. However, the three remaining undeveloped properties should be developed in accordance with existing zoning with consideration for the effects of any non-residential traffic associated with the development. There is a small lot on the corner of New Mark Esplanade and Maryland Avenue that possibly could be developed as a residential property although the topography is not favorable. The lot that is southeast of the Child Resource Center has been developed as the Curtis Place subdivision, and the Wootton Oaks townhouses are on the lot that is southwest of the Center.

To the west of the Potomac Valley Nursing and Wellness Center is an undeveloped 5-acre parcel, zoned R-90, and owned by that facility. This site was identified as Parcel 2 in the 1985 Plan. A past application to site elderly housing on that property at a density rate greater than R-90 was denied. The 1985 Plan noted that "There may be appropriate institutional uses for this site compatible with the scale and residential character of the adjacent neighborhood."

Just south of that parcel is the 9.75 acre former Oakridge School site (Parcel 3). It is privately owned, zoned R-90, but has a city-maintained stormwater drainage facility on the property. The 1985 Plan recommended "that the parcel be used for residential, educational, recreational or community purposes in order to protect and strengthen the residential character of Planning Area 3." In 1991 the City of Rockville entered into formal, individual agreements with the residents of Don Mills Court. Those agreements stipulate that the access driveway to the city-maintained stormwater infiltration facility site will only be used by city personnel for the purposes of access to the facility. The agreement stipulates that the [City] "will not permit the access road to be used by the general public or private persons for any purpose, including, but not limited to, access by future development to Don Mills Court. The agreement also states "At the end of the term of this Agreement, nothing herein shall be taken as an admission that the

use of Don Mills Court as an access is appropriate or inappropriate, and its use for access will be judged by the prevailing standards and procedures existing at the time.” The agreement remains in effect for as long as the agreement signers own and reside at their respective residence(s) on Don Mills Court plus five years.

The other developable infill lots that were mentioned in the 1985 Plan have been developed or are outside of the planning area and part of the Tower Oaks Development.

### **Adjacent Areas**

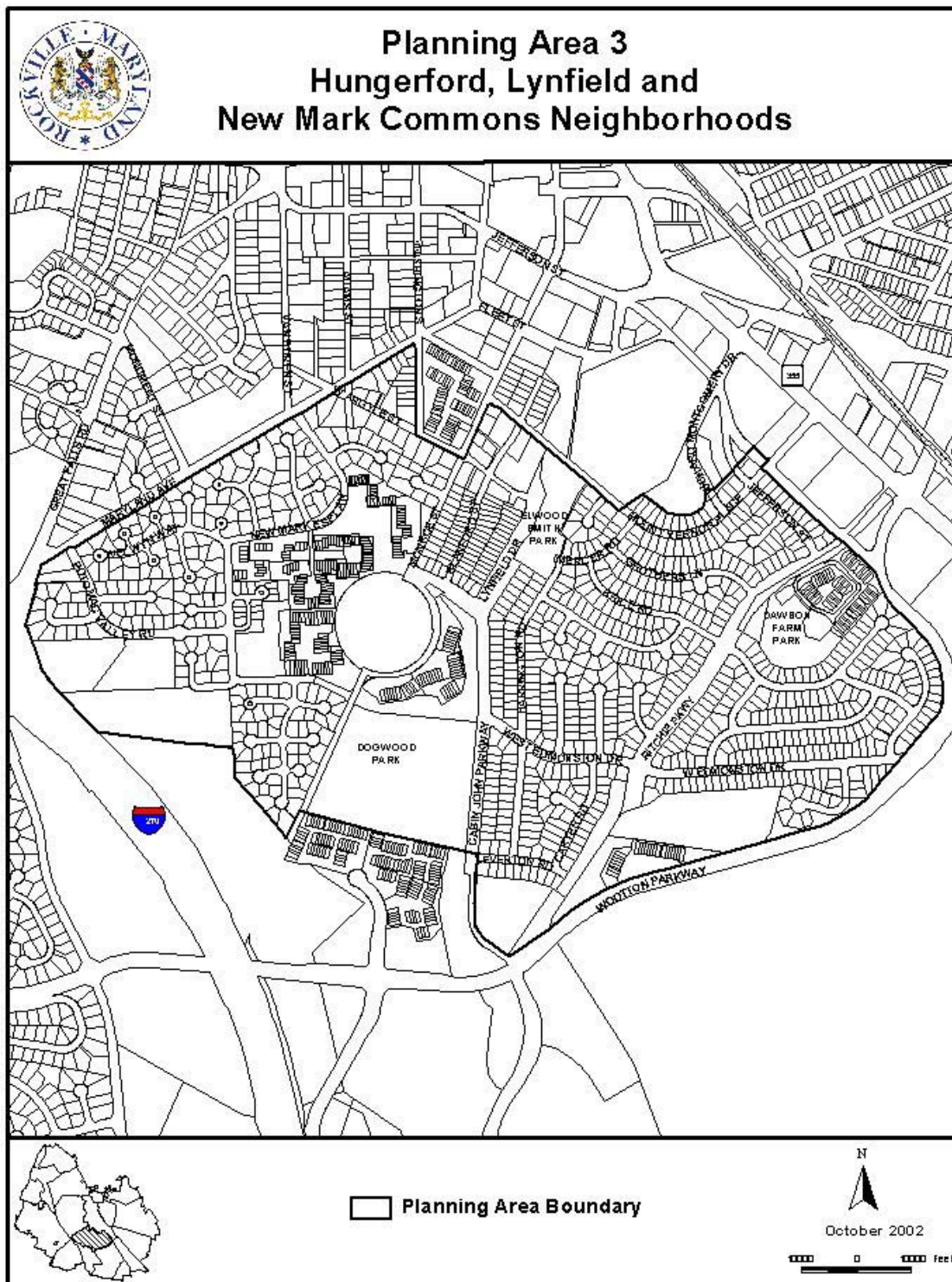
The construction of the new Richard Montgomery High School building and the relocation of playing fields is also of concern to the neighborhood. Residents would like an adequate buffer between the school building and playing fields along the street to ensure that noise and light spill over is minimized for the residential properties along Mount Vernon Place.

Adjacent commercial areas that are located along the boundaries also cause some concern to Planning Area 3 residents. The planned extension of Fleet Street between the neighborhood and commercial properties on Rockville Pike will heighten this concern. Appropriate landscaping will be necessary for a buffer when the street is constructed. Current neighborhood residents are concerned about the visual impacts of the height of office buildings in the Tower Oaks development. However, the approved building heights are in accordance with the city’s zoning regulations. It is important that all commercial development, whether office or retail, be buffered from adjacent residential neighborhoods.

### **Recommendations**

1. Maintain the current zoning on any infill lot in the planning area and reaffirm the 1985 Plan recommendations for Parcels 2 and 3.
2. Ensure that adequate buffers be created between any future commercial or institutional development and the adjacent residential properties.
3. It is not recommended that the neighborhood plan for Planning Area 3 be updated at this time. However, specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.





## PLANNING AREA 4

### WEST END AND WOODLEY GARDENS EAST-WEST

#### INTRODUCTION

The West End and Woodley Gardens East-West neighborhoods (Planning Area 4) are comprised of 742 acres and are located in the center of Rockville between the Town Center and I-270. The area is bordered on the north by Nelson Street and the College Gardens subdivision, and on the south by Maryland Avenue. It also includes the area between Fleet Street, Monroe Street, West Argyle Street, and Maryland Avenue. A portion of this area is also considered to be both within 1) the Coordinated Planning Area with the Town Center and 2) the Transitional District between the Town Center and the West End.

Planning Area 4 includes the historic West End Park subdivision, Martins Lane, as well as portions of the Woodley Gardens neighborhood which was developed in the mid 1960s and the 1980s Courthouse Walk townhouse complex.

The *West End-Woodley Gardens East/West Neighborhood Plan* for Planning Area 4 was adopted in 1989. At that time, the major goals were to maintain the integrity of the planning area as a residential community and to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood.

#### History

Parts of Planning Area 4 were among the areas first settled in Rockville. The planning area encompasses the 1784 “Williamsburgh” tract of 200 acres that was later subdivided into 85 lots along Wood Lane, Middle Lane, Commerce Lane (Montgomery Avenue), and Jefferson Street. Other subdivisions were created in the West End throughout the nineteenth century. The most famous was the West End Park subdivision by Henry N. Copp around 1890. The traffic circles at Mannakee Street and Beall Avenue and at Laird, Luckett and Lynch Streets are the result of this design although most of the streets are arranged in a traditional grid pattern. However, many of the lots were not actually built upon until well into the twentieth century.

The Bealls owned a great deal of land in the West End. In the late 1770s, the Beall family settled on land near what is now North Adams Street. Their 1815 family homestead still exists at 103 West Montgomery Avenue. Later, Margaret Beall gave or sold land along the south side of Martin’s Lane to her former slaves and servants. The north side of Martin’s Lane had been farmed in the 1830s by Samuel Martin, a free African-American. Many descendants of these original families still reside along Martins Lane, and the neighborhood contains homes dating from the mid-1800s through the late





twentieth century. Of particular note is the historic Haiti Cemetery that is located to the rear of 205 Martins Lane. Currently owned and maintained by the Crutchfield family, this is the earliest known cemetery for African American residents of Rockville and adds to the historical significance of the neighborhood.

The gradual development of the area gives Planning Area 4 its characteristic mix of architectural styles ranging from the distinctive Victorians of West Montgomery Avenue to the modern split-level houses of Woodley Gardens. Garden apartments, townhouses, and senior citizen housing are more recent additions to the area. The result of this patchwork development pattern and variety of architectural styles is a unique neighborhood recalling both the small town of the past and the growing city of today.

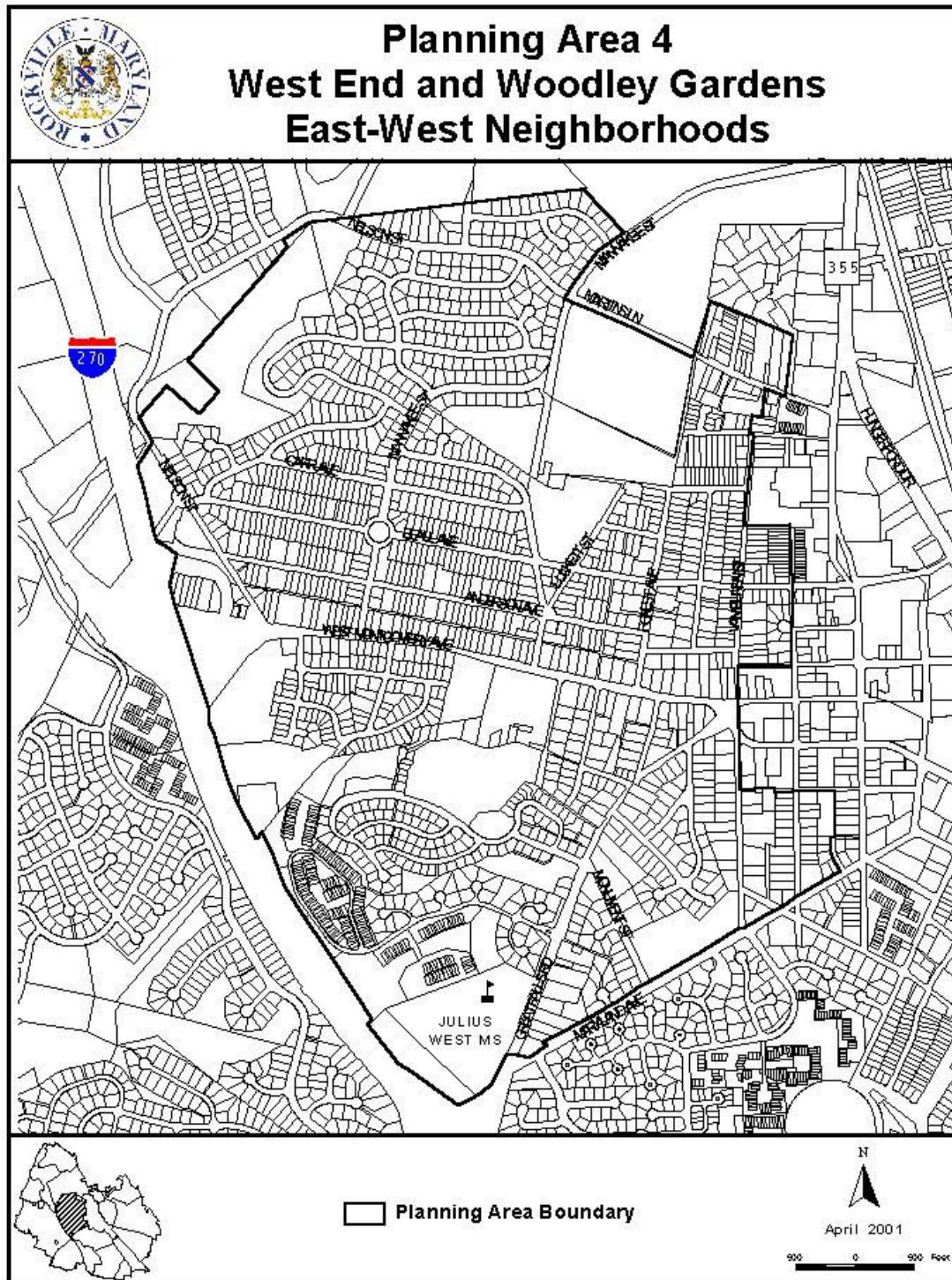
The West Montgomery Avenue Historic District comprises buildings located along portions of West Montgomery Avenue, Forest Avenue, Upton Street, Laird Street and Harrison Street. The historic district includes the Beall-Dawson House which is now occupied by the Montgomery County Historical Society. In addition, there are scattered homes throughout the planning area that have some historical or architectural significance although they are not within the historic district. There are also many examples of early twentieth century bungalows and colonial revival homes that are interesting architecturally and contribute to the historic and residential character of the neighborhood. There are areas where the historic district could be expanded. This is discussed further in the Historic Preservation chapter.

## **Current Conditions**

Two major roadways pass through the neighborhood: West Montgomery Avenue (MD Route 28) which bisects the neighborhood and Great Falls Road (MD Route 189) which separates the Monument Triangle area from the rest of the West End. Although the interstate highway just skirts the planning area, there is access to I-270 at West Montgomery Avenue and Falls Road. Traffic on these roads can be heavy especially during rush hours. In addition, traffic noise from I-270 and sections of West Montgomery Avenue is distinctly audible in some parts of the planning area.

The area remains primarily residential. The majority of the single-family homes are zoned either R-60 or R-90. The Rose Hill subdivision is currently under construction on land formerly owned by the Chestnut Lodge Hospital. This was developed under the planned residential unit (PRU) development process and includes 126 single-family homes.

Along the eastern edge of the West End neighborhood is a “Coordinated Planning Area” that is considered to be both a part of Town Center Planning Area and Planning Area 4. Located in part along the east side of North Adams Street, this area is zoned transitional office (O-2). This zone was created to stabilize residential neighborhoods near commercial and office zones by establishing a transition between such uses and nearby residential uses. It was also hoped that this transition zone would promote the preservation of existing structures that are often architecturally historic although no longer suited for residential use by allowing them to be used as low impact offices. And, indeed, some of the structures within the O-2 zone are also within the historic district. It was noted in the 1989 West End Plan that “there was a general concern about the continuing encroachment of non-residential uses into the residential neighborhoods of the planning area.”



Institutional uses in the planning area are varied. There are numerous churches, most of which are located on West Montgomery Avenue or on the western edge of the planning area. Public schools include Beall Elementary and Julius West Middle School, with the Washington Waldorf School expected to establish a private school on the former Chestnut Lodge property. Rock Terrace Special School, a special education facility, is now included in the adjoining Woodley Gardens and College Gardens Planning Area as part of the entire site owned by Montgomery County Public Schools.

Chestnut Lodge Hospital had been located on 20.4 acres off of West Montgomery Avenue. Constructed in 1887, the original building served as the Woodlawn Hotel for those trying to escape the summer heat of the city of Washington, D.C. In 1910, Ernest L. Bullard purchased the property and founded Chestnut Lodge, a private sanitarium, devoted to treating the mentally ill. In the 1990s, some of the property was sold and subdivided for residences. The Chestnut Lodge facility closed when CPC Health filed for Chapter 11 protection and the property and buildings were purchased by the Washington Waldorf School. The expected future use of the property is as a private educational institution.

There are a number of parks in the planning area. Rockville Municipal Swim Center and Welsh Park are adjacent to each other and provide a variety of facilities on over 50 acres of land. Woodley Gardens Park is located along the western edge of the neighborhood. This 37.5 acre park is located on each side of Watts Branch and provides some environmental protection to that stream.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Town Center**

The Town Center is the major retail area for the neighborhood, and how it is redeveloped will have an impact upon the West End community. Some would like to see more residential uses, restaurants, and low rise office buildings within the Town Center. The Town Center Master Plan proposes a development concept that includes residential uses, restaurants, and both low and high rise office buildings. Since the West End lies directly between the Town Center and Interstate 270, the potential for cut-through traffic and additional traffic noise will increase. Specific plans to deal with this problem may be required.

### **Traffic and Pedestrian Issues**

Use of neighborhood streets by through-traffic to avoid the congestion on the primary roads is unwelcome in any residential area. In the West End it is a particular problem for two reasons. First, the neighborhood's location adjacent to the Town Center makes it likely that drivers will attempt to avoid traffic on West Montgomery Avenue by using the streets in the West End. Secondly, the streets of the West End were laid out in a grid pattern in the nineteenth century and were not planned for twentieth century traffic. Even if the existing street rights-of-way were large enough, widening the roads would adversely affect the character of the residential neighborhood because many of the existing homes are relatively close to the street. Widening streets also encourages greater automobile speed and volume, which is not desirable.

Current and available methods to control cut through traffic are through the establishment of "no entrance" zones during certain times of the day, one way streets, speed

humps, and strict enforcement of traffic laws. These should be continued and implemented where practical.

Because the streets are narrow, often there is only enough room for a sidewalk to be on one side of the street. A few streets have no sidewalks. Although on one hand, the lack of sidewalks is reminiscent of a more rural community, not having a place to walk safely can be dangerous to today's pedestrian. Therefore, the existing plan for completion of the sidewalk network in the West End should be implemented. If sidewalks are necessary in the historic district, it is desirable to have brick sidewalks arranged in a herringbone pattern because that is the pattern that was traditionally used in Rockville.

Another area of concern for pedestrians is unsafe crosswalks. Most of the crosswalks are fairly safe within the residential section of the planning area. However, crossing the major roadways can be more dangerous because of either the width of the roadway or the lack of pedestrian signals at the traffic light. The intersection of Jefferson and Montgomery is particularly difficult to cross because of the lack of a clearly designated route and pedestrian signals at this extremely busy intersection. The intersection of Falls Road and Maryland Avenue also seems daunting for the pedestrian because of the wide road width and multiple lanes for vehicles coming from numerous directions. Crosswalks and pedestrian signals should be installed where necessary to promote safe passage at intersections.

Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

### **Institutional Uses**

Traditionally, institutions such as churches and schools tended to draw most, if not all, of their membership from the local neighborhood or community. However, this is no longer true. Since many institutional uses draw attendance from outside the neighborhood, it is important to remain sensitive to the needs of the immediate residential neighborhood. Adequate buffers must be maintained or installed between the institutional use and abutting residential properties. Methods to handle any increased traffic also must be addressed.

### **Infill**

There are a limited number of vacant lots that may be buildable in the planning area. In addition, there are large lots that possibly may be resubdivided. These are scattered throughout the neighborhood except for a cluster of deep, large lots along Martin's Lane and near Monument Street and Great Falls Road in addition to three other long lots off Great Falls Road. Even though there appear to be many lots that could be subdivided because they are deep and have enough area, most of these are too narrow to meet the zoning requirements for either a full width lot or may not meet the provisions of the subdivision regulations for compatibility.

The 1989 *West End Plan* made various recommendations concerning possible development areas. Many of the zoning recommendations were implemented. However, some recommendations were not implemented and may need to be re-evaluated. These are outlined below.

**Monument Triangle & Nelson Street**

There are a number of very large lots in and adjacent to the Monument Triangle area. The 1989 Plan emphasized maintaining the residential character of the area especially in light of the highway interchanges at Great Falls Road, Route 28, and I-270. The plan had a similar recommendation for Nelson Street. This plan reinforces that concept.

**Residence at 100 South Adams Street**

The 1989 *West End Plan* recommends that the properties on the east side of South Adams Street, south of West Jefferson Street, remain in the R-90 Zone. However, the house at 100 South Adams Street (the corner) is only five-six feet from Jefferson Street, and noise from Jefferson Street (MD 28) makes it poorly suited for residential use. The properties on either side of the house along Jefferson Street are zoned transitional office (O-2), so that rezoning this particular property to O-2 would not interfere with the continuity of the overall zone. Future rezoning of the property to the O-2 Zone may be appropriate, but should only be considered if recommended in an update to the West End Neighborhood Plan. However, as the other residences on South Adams Street are further from Jefferson Street and not as affected by the immediate noise from that thoroughfare, it is recommended that these remain in the current residential zone.

**Dawson Avenue Apartments**

The deteriorated condition of some of the garden apartment buildings located on Dawson Avenue does not appear to have changed since mentioned in the 1989 *West End Plan*. These units are in private ownership and technically meet the minimum housing code although violations are frequent. A similar situation exists for the multifamily units on North Adams Street north of Beall Avenue. Consequently, it is recommended that the City should actively pursue a creative solution for the renovation of the apartments on Dawson Avenue and North Adams Street.

**Jerusalem/Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church, 17-21 Wood Lane/Beall Avenue**

This church owns several small parcels of property between Wood Lane and Beall Avenue. The church itself is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and the church and the adjacent parsonage are included within the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. Although these parcels are contiguous, each is zoned differently and include the R-60, O-2, and TCO-1 Zones.

The 1989 *West End Plan* recommended that elderly housing be allowed in the O-2 Zone to accommodate the congregation's desire to provide elderly housing on a portion of the property. The housing was never built. However, in order to simplify a possible future site plan for church property, it is recommended that all of the parcels be zoned O-2. As the church property is located between properties zoned TCO-1 along North Washington Street and a property zoned O-2 on its western property boundary, the zone change would be consistent with the overall goal of the transitional office zone.

## **Martins Lane**

As mentioned earlier, the Martins Lane neighborhood has cultural and historic significance as an early African-American neighborhood within the city. Known locally as Haiti (pronounced Hay – tie), it is one of the few black kinship communities left in the area. It is also one of the few areas in the West End neighborhood that has large lots that could be subdivided. The area is zoned R-60. The 1989 *West End Plan* recommended that:

The City should foster and support a broader understanding of the unique historical and architectural characteristics of the Martins Lane/Haiti Community. This support should include strategies that would enhance the kinship community and the historic properties that lie within it and reflect the wishes of the community and individual landowners. In addition, new townhouse development in the area should be compatible with the community in terms of site design and orientation.

Currently, there is a large townhouse development to the north of Martins Lane immediately adjacent to the Haiti Cemetery. Only a thin row of light planting of deciduous plants separates the townhouses from the cemetery. This plan reconfirms the recommendations of the 1989 *West End Plan*.

Since there are a number of houses that are at least fifty years old in the neighborhood, as well as the Haiti Cemetery, the City should consider exploring options for the recognition and maintenance of the historic characteristics of the community.

## **522 West Montgomery Avenue (Buckingham Property)**

The property at 522 West Montgomery Avenue has been occupied as a single-family house since early in the twentieth century. The four-acre site is zoned R-S (one-half acre lots) which is a lower density than the most approximate adjacent neighborhoods (R-60) but is consistent with the existing zone for the adjacent Chestnut Lodge facility. The 1989 *West End Plan* recommended that the site be “zoned in a density compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and that the wooded character of the site will be preserved through careful site planning.”

This Plan recommends maintaining the R-S Zone for the property, and supports the development of the property at the base density afforded by the R-S Zone. However, given that the preservation of the trees is an important objective for the site, a Planned Residential Unit Development, with single family detached housing only and without allowing C-1 uses, could be considered in order to maximize the preservation of the trees. However, the number of new residential dwellings on the Buckingham property itself will be limited to 10 (ten) units, with an additional 3 (three) units possible to be located on the Baker and Yates properties if they are included as part of a PRU. In conjunction with the protection of as many trees as possible within common or public open space areas, an increase in density above the R-S zone may be possible on the site if all of the objectives in this Plan are achieved. The governing minimum lot size and maximum lot coverage that apply to the property shall be those of the R-90 Zone in order that the new development be compatible with existing surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, landscaped buffer areas must be provided on the eastern, southern and western property boundaries, adjacent to existing residential dwellings. Given the property's relationship

to the historically significant Chestnut Lodge and the historic character of the West Montgomery Avenue streetscape, it is appropriate for a portion of the property to be located within the Historic District, and for additional design review of new structures by the HDC on the site to ensure their compatibility. It is also recommended that there be no street connection to Brent Road.

### **Chestnut Lodge, 500 West Montgomery Avenue**

This property is unique in the City of Rockville because its historical uses are different than that of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In addition, the administration building at the facility is one of the few remaining examples of the French-Second Empire architectural styles in Rockville and dates back to 1887. The site's bucolic setting is consistent with its original use as a resort hotel and that of a turn-of-the-century mental health institution. Reuse of the facility as a private school or other institution would need not only to be compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the historic district but also to be compatible with and maintain an architecturally and historically significant structure. In addition, the grounds contain mature plantings that should be preserved.

This plan recommends that the site be maintained in an institutional use and retain its R-S Zone in order to offer as much protection as possible for the site's historic buildings and mature trees. A residential use on the property may be acceptable if the historic buildings and trees are protected. Development under a Special Development Procedure, such as a variable lot size development, cluster development or Planned Residential Unit (PRU), is recommended if the historic and tree preservation goals are achieved. Development under the Planned Residential Unit development procedure is preferred for its flexibility in site design. However, the number of new residential dwellings on the property should be limited to the base level of development afforded by the R-S Zone, and by the goal of this plan to retain the setting of the historic structures and treed area along West Montgomery Avenue with as little disturbance as possible. The governing minimum lot size, maximum lot coverage and minimum setback requirements that apply to the property shall be those of the R-90 Zone in order that the new development be compatible with existing surrounding neighborhoods. In addition, landscaped buffer areas must be provided on the eastern, southern and western property boundaries, adjacent to existing residential dwellings. Given the property's relationship to the historic character of the West Montgomery Avenue streetscape, it is appropriate for an expanded portion of the property to be located within the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District, and for additional design review of new structures on the remainder of the site by the HDC to ensure their compatibility. This plan recommends against allowing C-1 uses that are normally permitted in a planned residential unit development. Finally, a hotel/spa use in the Main Lodge Building may be an acceptable use as long as it is limited primarily to the existing buildings, without major additions, and is buffered from the adjacent neighborhoods, and protects the site's historic buildings and trees. This would require either a text amendment or the creation of a new zone to provide for this option.

### **Recommendations**

1. Continue to explore and implement various "traffic calming" and control techniques within the neighborhood to discourage cut-through traffic.

2. Work actively on options with the county and state highway divisions to provide a safe way for pedestrians to cross West Montgomery Avenue, East Jefferson Street and other busy intersections within the West End.
3. Install sidewalks and curbing on neighborhood streets especially on Beall and Anderson Avenues.
4. Maintain and strengthen the existing buffers between residential and non-residential areas.
5. Consider the expansion of the current historic district to include more properties.
6. Pursue actively the renovation and/or redevelopment options for the apartments on Dawson Avenue and the multi-family units on North Adams Street (north of Beall Avenue).
7. Change the existing zones for 100 South Adams Street (with conditions) and the Jerusalem/Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church properties on 17-21 Wood Lane to O-2.
8. Develop 522 West Montgomery Avenue (Buckingham Property) under the Planned Residential Unit process in order to save the historic trees on the site.
9. Explore options for the recognition and maintenance of the historic character of the structures along Martins Lane and in Haiti.
10. Maintain the residential character of the Monument Triangle and Nelson Street areas as in the 1989 *West End Plan*.
11. Review the Coordinated Planning Area boundary and the transitional zone boundary as part of the Zoning Map amendment process.



## **PLANNING AREA 5**

### **WOODLEY GARDENS AND COLLEGE GARDENS NEIGHBORHOODS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **History and Current Conditions**

The Woodley Gardens and College Gardens neighborhoods (Planning Area) 5 are located in the north-central section of the city, east of I-270, south of Gude Drive, west of Route 355, and north of Nelson and Mannakee streets. Major through traffic-routes are confined to Nelson Street, College Parkway, and Yale Place. The neighborhood streets located off the main thoroughfares are designed in cul-de-sacs so that traffic on these streets tends to be associated only with neighborhood residents. The only exception would be traffic going to and from the Senior Center, which is located in the former Woodley Gardens Elementary school building and just off of Carnation Drive.

Planning Area 5 is a stable residential area which is comprised of several subdivisions: College Gardens, Rockville Estates, and parts of Woodley Gardens. Much of the neighborhood is a mix of single family homes and townhouse units that were built in the 1960s. The homes and properties are well maintained. The streets are lined with trees. With the exception of the multi-family sites, the residential zone is R-90.

The multi-housing units (R-30) are located on the edges of the single family developments. The Woodley Gardens townhouse development is located between I-270 and Azalea Drive. The Plymouth Woods townhouse development is located along College Parkway mostly between Upper Watts Branch Park and Anderson Park. The units are individually owned, and the properties are also well maintained.

There are also two apartment complexes in the planning area with a total of 331 units. These complexes are located north of Montgomery College between College Parkway and West Gude Drive and east of Yale Place. Yale Village is separated from the single family neighborhoods to the west by the College Gardens Elementary School and College Gardens Park. Yale Village has a modern architectural design and is comprised of 210 units compared to Scarborough Square's 121 units. The apartments provide housing for families, individuals, and Montgomery College students.

Just south of the office buildings and included in the planning area is College Plaza, which is located on the corner of College Parkway and Route 355. This commercial plaza has a grocery store and a variety of small shops, but some of the stores have been vacant for some time. Built in the 1970s, the plaza buildings and site are in need of upgrading and renovation. On the opposite corner of College Parkway is the Columbia Gas site which is actually located in the County and not in the City. The Columbia Gas site is surrounded by a tall chain link and barbed wire fence. Together with the College Plaza, the gas site functions as a major gateway/entrance to the planning area. Any redevelopment of either site should be designed to be more compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The only other commercial property within the planning area is Woodley Gardens Shopping Center that is located off of Nelson Street on the western side of the planning area.

This small center was developed as a part of the Woodley Gardens residential neighborhood and contains convenience retail and small restaurants.

An I-3 zoned area is located on the east edge of the planning area along Route 355 and on both sides of West Gude Drive. All of the properties are developed currently as office buildings although there may be room for building expansion on individual lots.

There are over 110 acres of park land within the planning area. Upper Watts Branch Park Forest Preserve is the largest with 78.8 acres protecting Watts Branch Creek. Located in the northwest corner, the Senior Center is Rockville's only complex devoted to senior citizens. It is a large structure containing meeting rooms and spaces devoted to a variety of crafts as well as educational facilities and gym equipment.

There are only two institutional uses within the planning area. Montgomery College is a large complex with multiple buildings on 88 acres. It has the only college campus in Rockville and draws approximately 14,000 students from a wide area. These students all commute to the school as there are no residential dormitories at the school. Major traffic routes to the college are along Route 355, Mannakee Street, and Nelson Street (which connects to West Montgomery Avenue at the I-270 interchange).

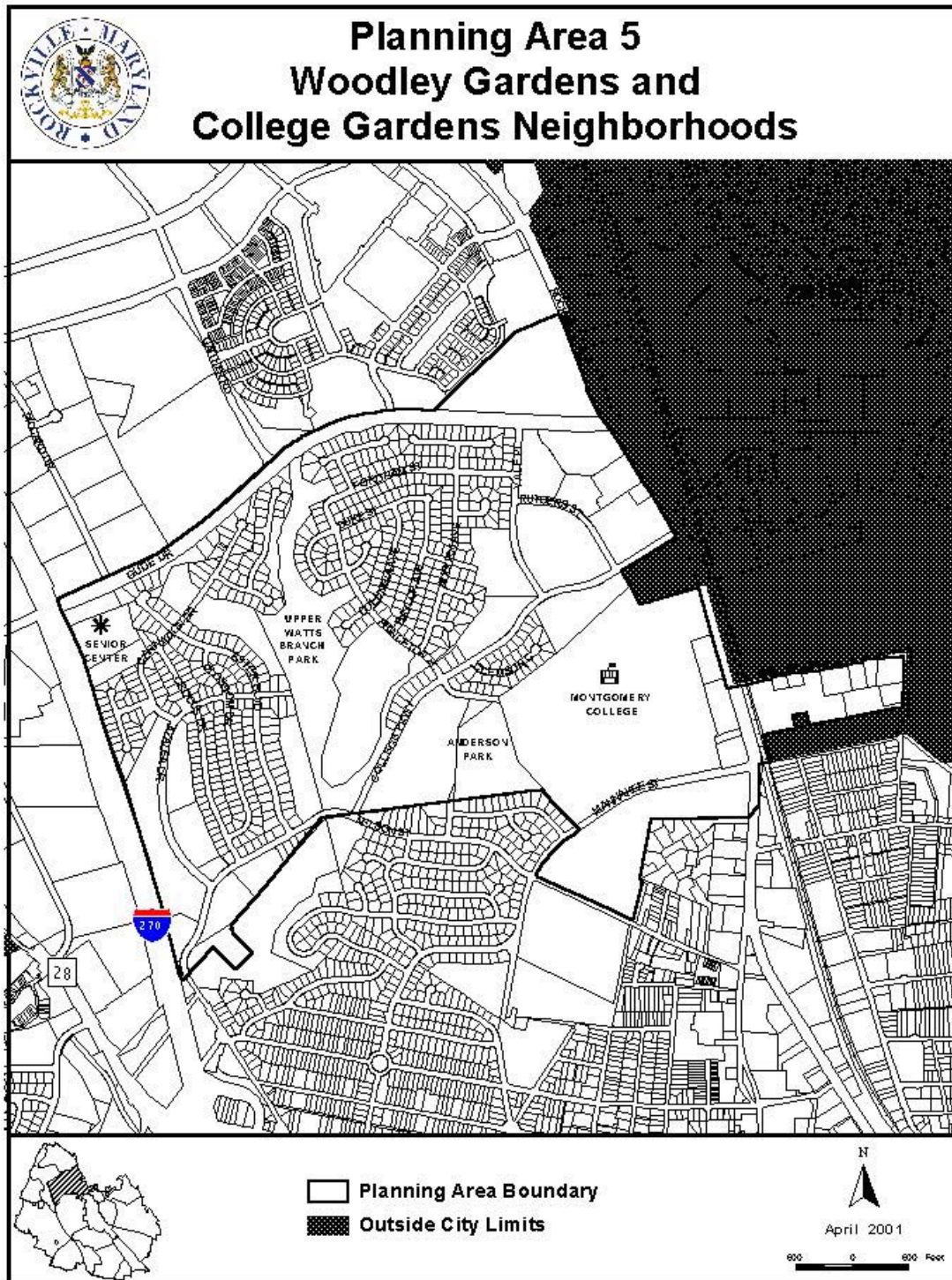
College Gardens Elementary School is the only primary school in the planning area. Located between the apartment complexes and the single family homes, the school is becoming increasingly important as a community center as well as an educational facility. The College Gardens Elementary School's enrollment comes from a wide area that includes the College Gardens Subdivision, Yale Village, Scarborough Place, Woodley Gardens Subdivision (north of Nelson Street), King Farm, and portions of Derwood in Montgomery County. The enrollment at the school is currently just below capacity at 439 students (1999/2000 school year) versus a capacity of 508 students; however, as the King Farm is developed, more school age children are expected to attend the school. Because College Gardens Elementary School provides space for many after-school educational, human service programs (including after-school childcare), and recreational programs that serve the community, the addition of the gym is critical for the continuation and improvement of those programs.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

It does not appear that there are any possibilities for resubdivision of residential lots within the Planning Area. The only parcel that may have redevelopment potential is the 3-acre Woodley Gardens Swim Club which is off of Nelson Street and adjacent to Woodley Gardens Park. There may also be expansion possibilities for the office properties along West Gude Drive. However, these buildings are set back from the residential neighborhoods. As long as adequate buffers are maintained, expansion of these buildings should not adversely affect the neighborhood.

Although the presence of Montgomery College is a benefit to the city, any expansion of the college may be of concern to planning area residents. Care should be taken to ensure that decisions regarding expansion of the college take into consideration possible impact on the planning area. Addressing traffic concerns and maintaining adequate buffers are especially important.



Located at the corner of Mannakee Street and Hungerford Drive, the Montgomery County Board of Education site was not included historically in any planning area. However, because activities on the property are closest to residents of Planning Area 5, the Board of Education site and the adjoining Rock Terrace School site are now included in the planning area. The 30-acre property could support uses of greater intensity than currently exist. Increased through-traffic along Mannakee and Nelson Streets that could result from a different use of the site are of particular concern. Specific recommendations for the development of the Board of Education site are included in the Critical Areas Section of the Land Use Chapter.

### **Stormwater Management Facilities**

Much of the planning area was developed before stormwater management was required. The Watts Branch Watershed Study identified several measures to repair stream damage that resulted from development prior to current stormwater management controls. Since typically stormwater management facilities are constructed in stream valleys, various parks along the Watts Branch Creek or its tributaries are logical areas for new or upgraded facilities. In developing stormwater management facilities for the planning area, the City is attempting to balance engineering needs for the facility(s) with environmental considerations as well as the social, recreational, and aesthetic concerns of neighborhood residents.

### **Traffic Issues**

There is an ongoing concern of the neighborhood regarding excessive speed and cut-through traffic within the residential neighborhoods. College Parkway, Nelson Street and Mannakee Street are popular east-west routes for non-neighborhood traffic. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

### **Recommendations**

1. If the Woodley Gardens Swim Club is proposed to be redeveloped, 1) maintain an acceptable institutional use compatible with the scale and character of the adjacent residential neighborhood; or 2) encourage a residential use for the property consistent with the existing zoning.
2. Ensure that adequate buffers are created between any future development, including the Carver Center site, and residential areas within the neighborhood. Close coordination with the adjacent civic associations shall be maintained to ensure that public input on the proposed buffers is received.
3. Continue to monitor any proposed development activities on the Board of Education property and support the development recommendations outlined in the Land Use Chapter.
4. Encourage the Board of Education to approve the construction of a gym at College Gardens Elementary School in order to maintain and improve educational and human service programs at the school.
5. It is not recommended that a neighborhood plan be prepared for the area.

## **PLANNING AREA SIX**

### **LINCOLN PARK NEIGHBORHOOD**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Lincoln Park (Planning Area 6) is located in north central Rockville between the North Stonestreet Avenue industrial area along the railroad tracks to the west and Horners Lane further to the east. The neighborhood is located south of Ashley Avenue and north of Howard Avenue. It is approximately 82 acres in size and contains approximately 340 households.

#### **History**

Lincoln Park has an extensive history dating back to the 1850s. In 1891, William W. Welsh purchased eight acres, and subdivided the property into 31 lots. "England's [First] Addition to Lincoln Park" was platted in 1892, and "England's Second Addition to Lincoln Park" completed the neighborhood. However, the neighborhood was not annexed into the city until 1949.

As one of the oldest African-American communities in the County, Lincoln Park is a unique area for the City and the County. Located just outside of the planning area, Lincoln High School is the oldest remaining high school constructed for African-American students within Montgomery County. The Lincoln Park neighborhood continues to have a very strong identity. This is due in part to the long-term residents including several generations of some families.

Because most of the subdivided parcels were purchased by individuals rather than a single developer, the mix of housing styles and types is interesting and varied. The narrow lots (mostly 50 feet) have created a very compact community. Although it was not originally part of Rockville, Lincoln Park has significance as an early African-American community within Montgomery County. There are approximately 13 structures that were built prior to 1920, and the former Lincoln High School has county-wide significance as an educational institution for the African-American population. A museum/cultural center celebrating local black history is being organized and will occupy a portion of the former high school. Located at the corner of Frederick Avenue and North Horners Lane, Galilean Fisherman's Cemetery dates back to the mid-nineteenth century and also provides a reference to the community's past. The Lincoln Park Civic Association is currently sponsoring a study to propose designation of Lincoln Park as a local historic district.



The Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan was prepared and adopted as part of the Rockville Master Plan in 1984. That plan included the Montgomery County Board of Education properties



as part of the study area although those properties were technically part of the Town Center Planning Area. The plan stressed three themes: neighborhood stability, affordable housing, and improved municipal services to the neighborhood. Encroaching industrial uses and through-traffic were seen as the most severe threats to neighborhood stability. The 1993 Master Plan reaffirmed the findings and recommendations of the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

The current zoning is single family (R-60) with the exception of a small R-20 section on Lenmore Avenue where Rocklin Park Apartments are located. Although Lincoln Park is predominantly a single-family neighborhood, multi-family housing is supplied by the private and public sectors. In addition to the Rocklin Park Apartments, Rockville Housing Enterprises operates a public housing project of 65 garden apartments units on Moore Drive. In the past, concerns were expressed about the high percentage of multi-family housing within the neighborhood and the condition of the former Rockville Housing Authority buildings (now Rockville Housing Enterprises). Both the interior and the exterior of the low income apartments were not maintained. However, improvements have been made both in the organizational structure of the housing authority and the overall upkeep of the site. The privately owned Rocklin Park Apartments have a history of being well maintained.

Israel Park is located in the center of the neighborhood and provides 6.7 acres of green space and sports fields for the neighborhood. Lincoln Terrace Park is another small neighborhood park with play equipment suited for small children and a basketball court. Memory Walk Park was recently completed. This is a small, commemorative park located on the corner of Lincoln and Douglas Avenues.

There are a few institutional uses in the planning area. There is a police substation located in the Lincoln Park Community Center. Although there are no schools in the neighborhood, the Montgomery County Board of Education owns numerous buildings on North



Stonestreet Avenue. However, the majority of institutional uses in the planning area are associated with churches. The Crusader Baptist Church is located in the former Lincoln High School building. The A. M. E. Zion Church and the Iglesia De Dios Church are also within the planning area. Located on North Horners Lane, the Mount Calvary Baptist Church is the largest church in the planning area. The church owns several buildings along North Horners Lane and Lincoln Avenue. These house a variety of activities including daycare.

There are two small neighborhood convenience centers within or near Lincoln Park. Both are considered non-conforming uses in terms of Rockville's Zoning Ordinance. The businesses can continue to operate but may not expand. Lack of exterior maintenance of the buildings has been an issue in the past.



The amount of land available for future residential construction is limited in the planning area. A few of the vacant parcels are adjacent to existing houses and are smaller than the current zoning requirement of 6,000 square feet. A number of the lots are considered “legal, non-conforming lots” because they were legally subdivided at the time but do not meet the current minimum width requirements for the R-60 zone. A house can be constructed on the lot provided it meets the current setback requirements or if a variance is obtained from the Board of Appeals. There is limited potential for subdividing existing lots. Although some of the existing lots are deep and are larger than the current area requirements for an R-60 lot, they are too narrow to meet the current zoning regulations and not large enough for two lots.

Unity Bridge (at Frederick Avenue) was reconstructed recently to provide easier access across the railroad tracks. There is a new addition to the Lincoln Park Community Center that houses an expanded gym and a computer center, and the City continues to provide a police substation in the center. Drainage improvements have been made to Israel Park, and Memory Walk Park was designed and installed.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Adjacent Industrial Area**

The Lincoln Park neighborhood is surrounded on three sides by industrial uses. North Stonestreet Avenue is a major gateway to the neighborhood, and some of the industrial sites along North Stonestreet Avenue are particularly unkempt and unattractive when viewed from the street.

On the north side of Ashley Avenue there is a long, narrow parcel that is located outside of the city limits. Known as the WINX tower site, there are three radio transmission towers and a small radio station on the 10.5 acre site. The 1984 Neighborhood Master Plan recommended that single family houses be placed on the site at an R-60 density.

This site is currently zoned I-1 in the County and is considered to be part of “Area 5” in the recent joint County-City study that developed an annexation policy for the Gude Drive/Dover Road area. Although the study mentioned Lincoln Park residents’ concerns regarding the WINX site (as well as concerns about the abutting industrial uses in general), no specific recommendations were made regarding the WINX property site. Annexation for properties in Area 5 would be considered favorably for sites that fall within the City’s I-1 zone. The upcoming update of the Upper Rock Creek Master Plan will also consider the land use for this site. However, residents in Lincoln Park continue to favor residential use as the highest priority for the site, and this plan reaffirms that recommendation.

Truck traffic and traffic associated with testing automobiles that are undergoing repairs is an ongoing issue. Ashley Avenue, North Stonestreet Avenue, Westmore Avenue, and North Horners Lane are the streets with the most consistent cut-through traffic issues. There have also been complaints about the parking of tractor trailers along some of the adjacent industrial streets such as Westmore Avenue as well as the noise associated with repair shops operating all night. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.



## Board of Education Properties

The Montgomery County Board of Education owns property on both sides of North Stonestreet Avenue. As mentioned, these sites were not part of the 1984 planning area boundary for Lincoln Park although they were part of the study area for the neighborhood. In fact, all of the properties south of Frederick Avenue and west of North Stonestreet Avenue are



part of the Town Center Planning Area. However, these properties are located on the edge of the Lincoln Park neighborhood and have a significant visual and social impact for the neighborhood

The Board of Education stores numerous tractor trailers on the lot adjacent to the former Lincoln High School. These are unsightly and inconsistent with the adjacent residential homes as well as detracting from the historic nature of the school building and its current use as a church and cultural center. The 1984 Neighborhood Plan recommended that the

Board of Education sites be redeveloped as either single family housing (R-60) or townhouse units as long as “special attention for community needs, such as provision of a tot lot, ... be considered at the time of development.” With the exception of the former Lincoln High School building, housing is still considered the best option for redevelopment of these properties because of the closeness of the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Since the Lincoln High School building has historical significance as an institution within the community, its continued use for institutional purposes is considered complementary to the neighborhood (although housing within the structure would also be appropriate).

## Institutional Uses

Institutions provide needed services to the community. However, increasingly, many institutions are drawing members or clients from a wide area. In addition, many churches no longer operate just on the Sabbath but sponsor programs throughout the week. Increased traffic during the hours of operation and parking on residential streets can be intrusive to the neighborhood. Patrons of institutional programs may not be cognizant of neighborhood traffic patterns or issues. There is a concern within the Lincoln Park community that the expansion of the Mount Calvary Baptist Church will overwhelm the residential nature of the neighborhood. Care needs to be taken to ensure that the church building expansion and the intensification of associated church uses are not disruptive to the adjoining single-family homeowners. Institutional uses, whether in a converted or new building, should be evaluated as to how well it conforms to the surrounding neighborhood.

## Community Appearance

The appearance of the neighborhood was another concern expressed in the 1984 Plan. The City has improved maintenance of City-owned facilities such as the Lincoln Park Community Center and Israel Park. However, improvements could be made to the overall

streetscape. This is especially true for the North Stonestreet Avenue area. Even though half of North Stonestreet Avenue is outside of Lincoln Park, the street is one of the major entrances to the neighborhood (which is true also for the East Rockville neighborhood) and functions as one of the neighborhood's major thoroughfares. There is a need for screening some of the business sites as well as for improving pedestrian conditions. Continued enforcement of the zoning ordinance and the property maintenance code is very important.

The neighborhood's housing stock is modest but generally well cared for. The City does operate various programs to help qualified, low-income residents maintain individual residences. There is a free paint program and low interest housing rehabilitation loans funded by the federal government. As the city's housing stock and population ages, these programs may need to be expanded and funding may need to be increased. Alternative funding programs may also need to be explored if the programs are to be expanded.

The city has developed a Street Tree Master Plan. Recommended replacement trees vary according to street but include the goldenrain tree, white oak, willow oak, and star magnolia for the Lincoln Park neighborhood. Adherence to the Street Tree Master Plan would assist in providing a visual unity throughout the neighborhood. Street trees are traditionally planted within the right-of-way so that they can be maintained by the City. However, because some of the streets in Lincoln Park have a narrow right-of-way, street trees have not been planted. It may be worthwhile to explore alternative policies for planting street trees partially on private property when the right-of-way is narrow.

Another related issue is the poor street drainage. Unfortunately, the area is flat and in the past proper drainage facilities were not installed along the streets. Drainage improvements were recently made to the fields in Israel Park. In addition, the city hired an engineering firm to conduct a drainage study for the planning area and recommended improvements.

## Recommendations

1. Urge the Montgomery County Board of Education to upgrade the maintenance and appearance of their properties.
2. Continue various programs to help low income individuals to maintain and rehabilitate their homes as needed.
3. Create a streetscape and property improvement district for North Stonestreet Avenue.
4. Continue to implement drainage improvements for neighborhood streets as outlined in the engineering report, "*Lincoln Park – Drainage Improvements.*"
5. Maintain the R-60 zone for the neighborhood.
6. Evaluate the appropriateness of existing zoning in portions of the planning area through an amendment to the *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* that addresses modifications that may be made in the adjacent portions of the Town Center Master Plan.
7. Explore the possibility of adjusting the zoning regulations in an updated neighborhood plan to allow lots to be subdivided along alleys or undeveloped City right-of-ways.

## **PLANNING AREA 7**

### **TWINBROOK FOREST AND NORTHEAST ROCKVILLE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Twinbrook Forest and Northeast Rockville (Planning Area 7) is located between Veirs Mill Road, First Street, Norbeck Road, and the city's eastern-most boundary along Rock Creek Park. Planning Area 7 includes the subdivisions of Twinbrook Forest, Geeraert's Addition to Twinbrook, Broadwood Manor, Silver Rock, Rockwood, and Burgundy Estates. A change has been made to the Planning Area boundary. The northwestern boundary is now along First Street and Norbeck Road. Many people consider the "Twinbrook" neighborhood to be located on both sides of Veirs Mill Road. However, for this document, Twinbrook is the neighborhood south of Veirs Mill Road.

The majority of the planning area was developed in response to the great demand for suburban single-family housing that followed World War II. The area was annexed in 1949.

#### **Current Conditions**

The majority of the single-family properties in the planning area are zoned R-60. The Burgundy Knolls Subdivision, which is located between First Street and Norbeck Road, is zoned R-75. The houses in the planning area were built mostly in the 1950s, slightly later than those in Twinbrook (South). The houses in Twinbrook Forest are in generally good condition with some variation of the Cape Cod and rambler styles popular then. There are very few multi-family complexes in the planning area. Meadow Hall Townhouses, Ashleigh Woods Townhouses, and two apartment complexes on Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway offer alternatives to single-family housing.

Streets are well maintained and tree lined. Some upgrades to the street drainage system may be needed, but this is not considered to be a major problem.

The planning area has at least 182 acres of open space. The historic Glenview Mansion and the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater are located on the 153-acre Civic Center site. Various other ballfields, playing courts, and picnic areas are located throughout the planning area. In addition, two large cemeteries provide open green space.

There are three schools within the Planning Area: Meadow Hall Elementary School, Carl Sandburg Special School, and Rockville High School. Rockville High School is scheduled for modernization in 2003.

Other institutional uses are in a variety of buildings within the planning area. Some are located in former school buildings owned by the County, such as the Lone Oak School building. Others, like the Twinbrook Library and the U.S. Army Armory, have their own buildings.

The primary commercial area for the neighborhood is along Veirs Mill Road. Twin Brook Plaza and Twin Brook Mart are located across from each other although Twin Brook Mart, on the south side of the road, is actually in Planning Area 8. Twinbrook Plaza has a large grocery store. Both plazas contain various small shops and restaurants, and there is also a fast food restaurant nearby. Burgundy Knolls Shopping Center is another small commercial center on the corner of Baltimore Road and First Street. This is mainly a neighborhood convenience center.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

There are very few vacant single-family lots or lots that could be re-subdivided within the planning area. There is a 4.6-acre property located on Norbeck Road adjacent to the Rockville Civic Center property. This is zoned R-60, but there may be some environmental constraints for the property as portions of the site are within a stream valley or buffer and also may be within a floodplain.

### **Property Maintenance**

The upkeep of property in older neighborhoods such as Twinbrook Forest is important in maintaining livability and housing values. In general, the houses originally were constructed to be “starter” homes, and some were constructed with better workmanship than others were. There are no deed restrictions outlining expected property maintenance or architectural standards. Some of the houses were updated over time. However, many of the homes have not been modified at all and are still considered to be affordable homes for the area.

Several low or no-cost programs are available to help qualified low-income residents repair and maintain their homes. These include the Home Improvement Program. In addition, the city instituted the Community Enhancement program that is designed to respond to citizen complaints about code violations and to provide interior and exterior inspections for rental properties. However, there are aesthetic issues that are not regulated.

### **Institutional Uses**

As mentioned, there are a variety of institutional uses in this planning area. Some sites, such as the Civic Center, draw many patrons who travel through neighborhood streets. There are other community service programs located throughout the neighborhood. One program necessitates round the clock use of the building with associated noise as people come and go from the site that is disruptive to the adjoining residents. There are other programs that have a lot of traffic associated with peak times that also can be disruptive to the residential character of the neighborhood even though the programs are needed. Care needs to be taken to ensure that adequate on-site parking is available for the use and the site has adequate buffers between it and adjoining homes.

## **Traffic Issues**

Planning Area 7 is designed with a number of streets that function as “primary” residential routes. These are roads that distribute traffic between neighborhood streets and arterial streets and typically are designed to carry more than 5,000 vehicles a day. Baltimore Road, Broadwood Drive, Edmonston Drive, Grandin Avenue, and Twinbrook Parkway are considered primary residential streets. Because these streets are evenly spread throughout the planning area, traffic can be more evenly dispersed rather than being centered on a few heavily traveled roadways. However, the City continues to monitor the traffic flow in the planning area so that roadway improvements can be made in a timely fashion. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

## **Recommendations**

1. Maintain the current residential zones within the planning area.
2. Ensure that aesthetic issues be addressed and adequate buffers be created between any future institutional use or institutional use expansion and the adjacent residential use.
3. Maintain adequate inspection services personnel in order to investigate complaints about inadequate maintenance of residential properties and enforce the City’s regulations.
4. It is not recommended that the neighborhood plan for Planning Area 7 be updated at this time.





## PLANNING AREA 8

### TWINBROOK

#### INTRODUCTION

##### History

Planning Area 8 (Twinbrook) contains 472.6 acres and is located in the southeastern section of the city between Veirs Mill Road and the railroad tracks. It extends from First Street on the northwest to the City boundary on the southeast.

The single-family residential area was developed in the 1940s and 1950s. Twinbrook incorporates four major subdivisions: Rockcrest (and its additions), Rockland, Twinbrook, and Halpine Village. The area was annexed to the City of Rockville in 1949, which also included the neighborhoods of Lincoln Park and Hungerford. Some of the street names reflect the World War II effort, and the subdivisions housed homecoming GIs and their families.



The Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan was approved and adopted in 1982. The Metro station was being constructed then, and the neighborhood was concerned about possible adverse effects of the new Twinbrook station. Anticipated problems included increased through-traffic and parking along commuter neighborhood streets.

##### Current Conditions

The Twinbrook neighborhood consists of predominantly single-family homes that are zoned R-60. The homes are predominantly small Cape Cod and rambler style houses. Streets are lined with trees. Parking is mostly along the street since many of the houses do not have garages or driveways. There are two small townhouse developments within the planning area: Rockcrest Townhouses, which are located just off of First Street, and Halpine Village, which is located off of Halpine road along the City boundary. These developments are located on opposite edges of the planning area.

The planning area also includes a small service industrial area (I-2) located on the southernmost portion of Lewis Avenue. In addition, there are a number of low-rise office buildings located on Halpine Road adjacent to the Halpine Village townhouses. Access to the offices is off of Twinbrook Parkway from a section of roadway that is outside of the City boundaries.

Cut-through traffic issues have become a concern in the Twinbrook neighborhood, specifically on streets that are connections between different sections.

The main commercial area that serves the planning area is along Veirs Mill Road that also includes two sites on Atlantic Avenue. The commercial area includes both sides of Veirs Mill Road although only the south side of the street is included in Planning Area 8. The other side of Veirs Mill Road is within Planning Area 7 (Twinbrook Crest and Northeast Rockville). The commercial strip along Veirs Mill Road includes Twinbrook Plaza (with a large grocery store), the Twinbrook branch of the Montgomery County public library system, a post office, various small shops, restaurants, and a fast food restaurant.

There is only one elementary school within the planning area. Currently, student enrollment at Twinbrook Elementary School is below capacity by approximately 100 students (based on 1998-99 enrollment). Built in 1956, the school was renovated in 1986 and includes a gym.

There are a few churches in the planning area. These are located just off the Veirs Mill service road and Halpine Road and do not seem to present a problem for the neighborhood in terms of excess traffic.

The planning area contains three parks totaling 21 acres which is only 4% of the area. The Twinbrook Community Recreation Center was completed in 2000 and provides a gym, fitness center, multi-purpose rooms, game rooms, as well as a satellite office for a community outreach police officer. Rockcrest Park provides a narrow greenway/bike path along a tributary to Rock Creek. The Twinbrook Swimming Pool Corporation is a private organization that owns a pool complex on approximately 4.8 acres that are adjacent to Twinbrook Park.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

There are few vacant lots within the planning area. However, just outside of the Twinbrook planning area is the Twinbrook Metro Station site. Portions of the property are within the city and fall within the Rockville Pike Corridor Planning Area. However, a fairly large portion of the property is within Montgomery County's jurisdiction. The site will be developed in the near future, and depending upon what is approved, could affect the Twinbrook neighborhood. Use of the site will need to be designed carefully to buffer the neighborhood. Any proposal for a possible connection of the Metro property to the Twinbrook street system will also need to be evaluated carefully. Master Plan recommendations for the Twinbrook Station Metro site are discussed in the Land Use Chapter.

Any redevelopment or expansion of the industrial buildings along Lewis Avenue also affects the neighborhood as there are homes located directly across the street from the industrial area. Aesthetic compatibility with nearby residences, noise, and increased traffic would be possible negative impacts of expanded development.



## City Boundary

There are approximately ten residential properties that are located on the west side of Halpine Road where Halpine Road meets Twinbrook Parkway. Some of these properties are located entirely within the County, and some are located partially within the City. Although this does not appear to be a critical issue at the current time, it would simplify the delineation of the City boundary if the boundary were along Twinbrook Parkway to include those properties in this particular area.

## Recommendations

1. Maintain the R-60 zone for the neighborhood with the exception of the southwest corner of Lewis Avenue and Halpine Road as discussed in the Land Use Chapter.
2. Ensure that aesthetic issues be addressed and adequate buffers be created between any future industrial or office development expansion and the planning area.
3. Maintain the R-60 zone for single family housing on the Twinbrook Swimming Pool Corp. site if it is developed or acquire the site for additional park and green space to increase the size of the park.
4. Consult with County officials to ensure that development of the Metro site does not adversely affect the Twinbrook neighborhood in terms of increased traffic, noise, lighting, aesthetics, etc.
5. Strive to have the entire Twinbrook WMATA/Metro site annexed into the City of Rockville.
6. Maintain adequate inspection services personnel in order to investigate complaints about inadequate maintenance of residential properties and enforce the City's regulations.
7. It is not recommended that the neighborhood plan for Planning Area 8 be updated at this time.
8. Cut-through traffic through the neighborhood should be discouraged by exploration and implementation of traffic calming and control methods.



## PLANNING AREA 10

### MONTROSE NEIGHBORHOOD

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Current Conditions

The Montrose Neighborhood (Planning Area 10) is located in the southern section of the city in the triangle formed by East Jefferson Street, Woodmont Country Club, and the southern boundary of the city at Montrose Road and Rollins Avenue.

Although it is one of the smallest of the planning areas, Montrose provides one of the most diverse ranges of residential options in the city. Within a relatively small neighborhood, there is a mix of single-family houses, townhouses, garden apartments, and high-rise apartment buildings. Most of the housing was built in the 1950s and 1960s. Zoning varies, but the single family homes are zoned primarily R-90. Single family homes are generally brick contemporary styled houses. The properties are well maintained.

Ring House is high-rise senior housing with 248 units of housing on East Jefferson Street. Congressional Towers are four high rise apartment buildings located on Congressional Lane. Rollins Park Apartments have 245 units of garden style apartments that are located between Congressional Lane and Rollins Avenue. The exteriors of the properties are well maintained.



There are two city parks within the planning area. Montrose Park and Community Center is located on 5.7 acres of land off of Congressional Lane. The park has play equipment, a baseball field, a basketball court, tennis courts, picnic tables and grills. Montrose Woods Park is comprised of 6.1 acres and contains play equipment. It has been designated as a forest preserve and an urban wildlife sanctuary.

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church and School are located on a 15.16-acre parcel off Montrose Road. It is the largest institutional use within the neighborhood. The Ezras Israel Congregation is located at 803 Montrose Road.

There are no neighborhood commercial centers within the neighborhood. The neighborhood depends upon the Rockville Pike corridor for its local shopping needs. There is a need to retain convenient retail uses such as grocery and drug stores nearby especially because of the elderly population in the neighborhood.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

There is only one “vacant” lot within the planning area. It is approximately 1.6 acres, located midway on the northwest side of Martha Terrace, and currently has a parking lot on the front portion of the parcel. Nearby on the same side of the street is a 3.16-acre parcel that currently houses the pool for Congressional Towers. There is a possibility that the use could be expanded or another use proposed for this lot. St. Elizabeth Church is located on a 15.16-acre site that also provides room for institutional expansion.

### **Adjacent Commercial Areas**

The spread and impact of adjacent commercial areas is a concern of the neighborhood. Although Montrose residents appreciate the convenience of the nearby Rockville Pike shopping areas, it is important that the residential area continues to be protected from non-residential intrusion. The Post Office on Rollins Avenue provides a needed service to the neighborhood; and if relocated, should remain in the immediate area. In addition, elderly residents in the neighborhood have expressed concern over the lack of a grocery store that is conveniently located.

### **Traffic Issues**

Concerns about cut-through traffic between Rockville Pike, Montrose Road and I-270 are currently addressed through turning movement restrictions. Although this can create inconvenience to the residents, it is important to limit the non-local traffic on neighborhood streets. Any development that might tend to add more trips to neighborhood streets should be studied carefully. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

Pedestrian and bicycle transportation improvement for the Montrose area is a pedestrian and bikeway connection to the Millennium Trail along Wootton Parkway, and to other bikeways designated in the City's Bikeway Master Plan.

Montrose Road is a four-lane county-maintained road. Currently, the County is studying the feasibility of constructing a road (the Montrose Parkway) just south of North Farm and the Montrose neighborhoods. This may also help to decrease traffic immediately adjacent to the neighborhood.

### **Recommendations**

1. Maintain and strengthen the existing buffers between residential and non-residential areas.
2. Ensure that adequate buffers are created between any future development and residential areas within the neighborhood.
3. Continue to explore the extension of East Jefferson Street to the north.
4. There does not appear to be a need for a specific neighborhood plan for Montrose at this time because there are no major land use issues to be considered other than the possible development of Woodmont Country Club which is covered in the Land Use Chapter.





## PLANNING AREA 11

### NORTH FARM

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Current Conditions

The North Farm Neighborhood (Planning Area 11) is located along the south central boundary of the city off Montrose Road and east of I-270. The North Farm neighborhood is one of the smallest of all the developed planning areas but was designated as a separate planning area because of its relative isolation from the rest of the city. However, the planning area also includes the Woodmont Country Club, a privately-owned 550-acre golf course. If the country club is ever developed, the planning area would encompass more people and structures as a result.

The North Farm Subdivision was built in the 1970s. There are only two entrances to the neighborhood, and the streets are designed in a curvilinear pattern rather than in a urban grid street pattern. Many of the roads end in cul-de-sacs. The zone is R-90. The houses are in designed in traditional neo-colonial architectural styles and are well maintained. The North Farm Citizens' Association represents all the residential development in the planning area and provides a strong voice for the residents.



North Farm Park is located along Montrose Road in the center of the housing development. The park is a pleasant natural feature and acts as a buffer between some of the houses and Montrose Road. This 5.5 acre park contains play equipment, basketball and tennis courts, a park shelter and restrooms.

There are no commercial/retail uses or schools in the neighborhood.

#### CRITICAL ISSUES

##### Infill

There are no lots that are vacant within the neighborhood. Consequently, infill is not an issue for this particular area.

##### Woodmont Country Club

Currently, the golf club is considered an open space amenity for the area even though it does not allow public access. However, any future development of the country club would be a



change for the neighborhood. Any new buildings on the country club should be buffered from the North Farm subdivision. Traffic patterns would also need to be carefully considered so as to coordinate with the neighborhood's entrances. Recommendations for possible uses for Woodmont Country Club are covered in the land use chapter, and as follows.

The City does not anticipate or desire development of the Country Club property within the planning horizon of this Plan. However, if no longer used as a country club, it is recommended that the site be developed as a Comprehensive Planned Development. The property is envisioned to be developed in its entirety as a mixed-use community, with development densities not to exceed a maximum of .5 FAR for buildable land in nonresidential areas and 6.5 dwelling units per buildable acre. A neighborhood retail center may also be appropriate. A minimum of 35% open space is recommended for both passive and active recreation use on the property, including any wetland, stream buffer, and/or floodplains that are on the site. The Lyddane-Bradley House, built in 1858, also should be preserved because it is architecturally and historically significant to the City of Rockville. Development options that preserve trees and historic structures are preferred. Another important development parameter is the provision of adequate buffers from adjacent residential communities. At a minimum, the buffers should follow the required setbacks for CPDs found in the Zoning Ordinance, and may exceed those requirements based on site conditions and environmental features. These buffers should include existing tree stands and forested areas. The CPD should address the provision of a street plan that provides for adequate dispersal of site-generated traffic. The use of private streets within the CPD shall be minimized. The CPD, or any proposed development in the R-S Zone of some or all of the site, should also address the feasibility of providing a pedestrian and bikeway connection to the Millennium Trail along Wootton Parkway, and to other bikeways designated in the City's Bikeway Master Plan. Within the Comprehensive Planned Development, commercial uses should be located away from existing residential neighborhoods outside the CPD. However, a well-designed mix of uses within the CPD is encouraged.

### **Montrose Office Park and Tower Oaks**

The Montrose Office Park is a small office park located just to the northwest of North Farm. This does not appear to have much of an impact to the North Farm development as the office buildings are low, and there is a buffer of trees between the houses and the entrance drive to the offices.

Although the Tower Oaks development is not immediately adjacent to North Farm, some of the taller buildings may be visible. In addition, the area will experience increased traffic congestion due to the office development. However, there is a Class I bike path proposed for the Tower Oaks development, which would connect to Montrose Road. This has the possibility of providing an alternative means of transportation as well as being a recreational amenity.

### **Traffic Issues**

The Montrose Parkway is a proposed four-lane in Montgomery County. Currently, the County is studying the feasibility of constructing a road just south of North Farm. This may also help to decrease traffic immediately adjacent to the North Farm neighborhood. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

**Recommendations**

1. Maintain existing buffers between residential and non-residential areas.
2. Ensure that adequate buffers are created between any future development and North Farm.
3. There does not appear to be a need for a specific neighborhood plan for North Farm at this time other because there are no major land use issues to be considered other than the possible development of Woodmont Country Club which is covered in the Land Use Chapter.
4. Explore the installation of a light at the intersection of Farm Haven Drive and Montrose Parkway to help residents enter and exit the neighborhood from Montrose Parkway.



## **PLANNING AREA 13**

### **ORCHARD RIDGE, POTOMAC WOODS AND FALLS RIDGE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

##### **Current Conditions**

The Orchard Ridge, Potomac Woods and Falls Ridge Neighborhood (Planning Area 13) is a triangular area located between Falls Road and I-270 north of the city boundary. Its residential subdivisions were developed in the 1970s and 1980s. During this period, most of the areas west of I-270 were developed, and these developments tended to have larger houses on larger lots than had been typical in earlier decades. All are comprised of single family homes in good condition and have off street parking. The neighborhood includes the residential subdivisions of Falls Orchard, Potomac Woods, Potomac Woods East, Falls Ridge, and Orchard Ridge. These subdivisions are designed with curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Access from (or to) the neighborhoods to the major arterial roads (Falls Road, Wootton Parkway, and Seven Locks Road) is limited.



Between Seven Locks Road and I-270 is a smaller triangle of land that is zoned commercial (C-1), industrial (I-3), and Suburban Residential (RS). It acts as a buffer between I-270 and the residential neighborhoods to the west. The Rockville District Police Headquarters and the County Detention Center/Central Processing Unit are located in the R-S zone north of Wootton Parkway. Seven Locks Road and an evergreen buffer provides some visual separation from the adjoining neighborhood.

The Seven Locks Technical Center is located south of Wootton Parkway in the I-3 zone. This site is owned by Montgomery County and operated by the Department of Transportation. The facility is comprised of several buildings related to vehicle and highway maintenance. South of the Technical Center are two office buildings on the other two privately-owned properties in the I-3 zone.

Other institutional uses are located on the east side of Falls Road – the opposite side of the planning area. The Lutheran Church of the Cross is located in a four acre parcel just north of Orchard Ridge Park. The Potomac Woods Swim Club is located on the corner of Falls Road and Dunster Road adjacent to the Ritchie Park Elementary School. The school was remodeled in 1997 and has a capacity for 469 students although the 2000-01 student enrollment was only at 299. Across the street is St. Raphael's Catholic Church and Raphaels House, comprised of 30 units of elderly housing.

Potomac Woods Plaza (formerly the Seven Locks Plaza) is located in the southeast corner of Fortune Terrace. The plaza contains over 50,000 square feet of commercial space. The plaza is currently being remodeled to include a grocery store, a restaurant, and other service retail establishments.

There are two parks in the planning area. Potomac Woods Park is the largest and comprises 42 acres. It has a park shelter, rest rooms, playing equipment, various playing fields and courts, as well as picnic tables and grills. Orchard Ridge Park is 1.7 acres and has playing equipment, a basketball court, and benches.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill**

There is only one vacant lot within the planning area. It is a 4.23 acre site at the end of Locks Pond Court that is zoned R-90. It is between a parcel that has a stormwater management pond to the north and Potomac Woods Park to the north. It is wooded and would be an asset if added to Potomac Woods Park.

### **Montgomery County Facilities**

The County has operated a Detention Center on the site since 1960. In 1989, the County expanded the Center but also agreed to limit the population at the facility to 500 inmates and to build the Seneca Detention Facility elsewhere. The Detention Center and Seven Locks Technical Center are discussed in more detail in the Land Use Chapter.

### **Adjacent Development**

Future development of Fortune Parc is a concern to the residents and could have an impact on area traffic. This is a 45-acre undeveloped tract located immediately outside the city boundary at the intersection of Seven Locks Road and Montrose Road. The parcel is within the urban growth boundary as determined by the 1993 Master Plan, but it is unclear whether the site will be annexed into Rockville. However, the City will continue to work with the County and Rockville citizens to mitigate any negative impacts as this area is developed. Refer to the Urban Growth Chapter.

### **Traffic Issues**

Planning Area 13 is located between a number of collector/arterial roads. Falls Road (MD Route 189) is the primary north-south route on the western side of the neighborhood. Seven Locks Road is the primary north-south route on the eastern side of the neighborhood. Wootton Parkway bisects the residential community and is the only nearby east-west route within the City limits. The other major east-west route is Montrose Road which is just outside of the City limits to the south. Traffic on these roads continues to grow.

Traffic within the residential subdivisions is limited by the number of main entrances/exits within the individual neighborhood. For instance, there is only one entrance to the Potomac Woods East neighborhood. The interior roads end in cul-de-sacs, and there is no connection to the other subdivisions in the planning area. Orchard Ridge has two connections off Wootton Parkway, but similar interior conditions. Falls Orchard and Potomac Woods have one connection off Wootton Parkway, two connections off of Falls Road, and one connection to a County neighborhood to the south. However, the interior roads are curvilinear and designed so that they do not provide a short cut from one major road to the other. Consequently, cut through traffic is not a problem, but residents turning out of or into the neighborhood(s) may experience delays due to traffic on surrounding streets. Specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

### **Recommendations**

1. Acquire the property adjoining Potomac Woods Park for parkland.
2. Maintain adequate buffering between all private and public institutional, industrial, or commercial uses and the adjoining neighborhood.
3. Review any development proposal at the Fortune Parc site and convey the neighborhood's concerns about traffic and adequate site buffers to the County.





## PLANNING AREA 14

### ROCKSHIRE AND FALLSMEAD NEIGHBORHOODS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Current Conditions

The Rockshire and Fallsmead Neighborhood (Planning Area 14) includes the western-most sections of the city -- north of the city boundary, east of Glen Mill Road, south of Darnestown Road, and west of I-270. The planning area includes Rockshire, Fallsmead, Fallswood, Saddlebrook, Fallsbend, Horizon Hill, Watts Branch Meadows, Cambridge Heights, Carter Hills, Griffith Oaks and Glenora Hills subdivisions. The planning area is bisected by Wootton Parkway. Watts Branch Parkway and Wootton Parkway are the primary north-south internal travel routes. Falls Road, Hurley Avenue, and Darnestown Road are the primary east-west routes.

Planning Area 14 was developed primarily in the 1970s and 1980s. Compared to the neighborhoods around the town center and east of Route 355, it is still considered to be one of Rockville's newer neighborhoods. Houses are generally in good condition, although property maintenance may become more of an issue during the life of this Plan, and are generally larger than those in the older neighborhoods. Streets tend to be curvilinear with sidewalks, lined with mature trees, and end in cul-de-sacs. Generally, entrances to the individual subdivisions are limited. Traffic within the subdivisions is limited to the neighborhood, although residents are concerned about the potential for cut-through traffic as congestion increases on primary routes in and around the planning area..

Rockshire is the largest of the Planned Residential Units (PRUs) in the city. A PRU is a special development within the zoning regulations wherein greater flexibility is allowed in the layout of the subdivision so that other community goals can be achieved. In this case, some of the lots are smaller than would otherwise have been permitted under traditional zoning (R-90 and R-150). This clustering of houses creates more overall open space for the community. The planning area is developed primarily with single-family homes although there are a number of townhouse developments throughout the planning area.

There are also three senior citizen housing projects within the planning area. The Latvian Home is located on Hurley Avenue. The National Lutheran Home for the Aged is located on 25.5 acres of land along Veirs Drive adjacent to the Lakewood Country Club. It is a large facility that offers independent living units as well as nursing home care. Collingswood Nursing Home is located on the corner of Hurley Avenue and Dundee Road. It is currently expanding to offer additional care.



The Rockshire Giant Shopping Center was developed as a part of the Rockshire Planned Residential Unit. The center contains over 50,000 square feet of retail space devoted

to serving the needs of the local community, with the major tenant a grocery store.

There are several schools within the planning area: Lakewood Elementary School, Fallsmead Elementary School, Robert Frost Middle School, and Thomas S. Wootton High School. These are part of the Thomas S. Wootton Cluster. All are at or above capacity levels for student enrollment, and most are undergoing expansion or modernization.

The 213-acre Lakewood Country Club is located in the western edge of the planning area. Currently, it provides a sense of green open space for parts of the community although it is privately owned and public access is limited. It is the largest parcel within the planning area that could potentially be developed. Currently, it is zoned R-S. Development recommendations are discussed in the Land Use section of the master plan. The city owns a small parcel of undeveloped land on Wootton Parkway adjacent to the country club.

There are approximately 150 acres of city-owned parkland within the planning area. Parks include Horizon Hill Park, Rockmead Park, Wootton's Mill Park, and Glenora Park. All of these parks contain play equipment, playing field(s) and courts. These parks also have land that surrounds either Watts Branch Creek or its tributaries, offering some watershed protection to those streams. In addition, there is open space associated with the Fallsmead subdivision that provides green space to the neighborhood.

Wootton's Mill Park is the largest park in the area at 76.2 acres. It surrounds both sides of Watts Branch Creek providing environmental protection to the watershed. The park contains play equipment, tennis and basketball courts, garden plots, and trails. It functions as a forest preserve and an urban wildlife sanctuary. The ruins of Wootton Mill have been identified within the park. This is considered a significant historical and archaeological resource for the City of Rockville as the site of a water-powered mill that operated from ca. 1813 to 1905. The mill derived power from Watt's Branch to process grain and saw logs for landowners and neighbors. In addition, Dr. William Henry Holmes depicted the site in art works from ca. 1905 to 1917, many of which are in the collection of the National Museum of American Art. He lived at the Wootton's Mill miller's house from 1905 –1917 and was a significant personage in American art, ethnology, and archeology.

## **CRITICAL ISSUES**

### **Infill and Other Developable Properties**

There are very few residential infill lots within the planning area. On Hectic Hill Lane, there are three large lots within the city boundaries (totaling 9.66 acres) and two lots within the county (totaling 8.0 acres). Hectic Hill Lane is a private road (as wide as a typical driveway) just off of and parallel to Wootton Parkway. Currently, the lots are individually owned, and each of the lots has an existing single family house. These lots are zoned R-S in the City, but are much larger than the 20,000 sq. ft. minimum requirement for development. The street is adjacent to the Fallsmead subdivision, which is zoned R-150, but was developed as a Planned Residential Unit development.

The other property with the largest land area that could be developed is the 213 acre Lakewood Country Club. The City does not anticipate or desire development of the Country Club property within the planning horizon of this Plan. However, should the property no longer be used as a country club, this Plan recommends that it be developed under the Planned Residential Unit

(PRU) zoning regulations, without allowing C-1 uses on the property. Due to the environmental features on the site, careful site planning that preserves these features will be critical. A minimum of 35% open space is recommended for both active and passive recreation, including preserving the streams, wetlands, and floodplains on the site. Generous landscaped buffers, of a minimum width of 50 feet, adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods is also a critical element of a development plan for the property. The landscaped buffer shall not be provided within private lots. The use of private streets within the PRU shall be minimized. It is recommended that the site retain its R-E designation because of environmental restrictions on the site.

It is possible that the institutional uses within the planning area could be expanded. Indeed, there is a need for some school expansion. It is recommended that adequate buffers between the institutional use and adjacent residential uses be maintained or strengthened as necessary. One institutional use in the planning area, a 5-acre parcel known as Karma Academy, potentially could impact the neighborhood if expanded or redeveloped. Careful site planning and buffering will be critical in either scenario.

### **Traffic Issues**

Because there are so few entrances and/or exits into the neighborhoods, traffic can be heavy on the major thoroughfares. Cut-through traffic within the neighborhoods is discouraged because most of the streets are designed with many curves, end in cul-de-sacs, and have speed humps. Increasing congestion on primary roads in the vicinity have raised concerns about increased traffic on neighborhood streets. However, specific neighborhood traffic concerns will be addressed by the Transportation Division independent of the Master Plan.

Wootton Parkway is not recommended for widening within the time horizon of this Plan. However, the existing right-of-way should be preserved for future improvements, to be determined through study and a collaborative process with affected neighborhoods. The Millennium Trail has recently been constructed along the existing Wootton Parkway.

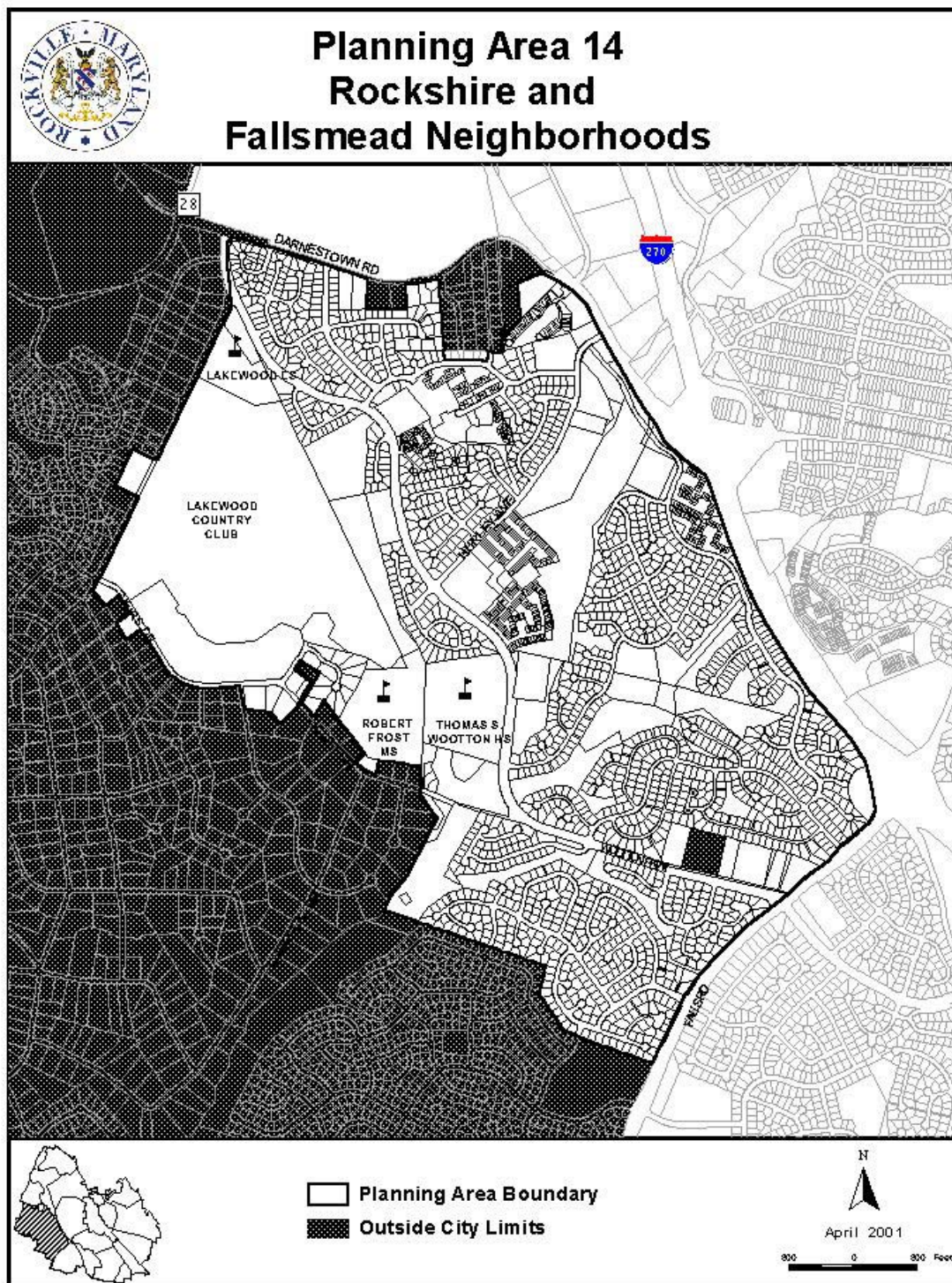
### **Noise**

Noise from I-270 is audible in some parts of the planning area. There is a wall between I-270 and the Watts Branch Parkway in the vicinity of Fallswood Court that is intended to reduce the impact of vehicle noise from the highway. Neighborhood residents have urged that portions of this wall be landscaped to lessen its visibility.

### **Recommendations**

1. Explore entering into an agreement with the State Highway Administration to allow the city to plant and maintain landscaping on state-owned property along a portion of the wall that is located between I-270 and Watts Branch Parkway.
2. Apply the Planned Residential Unit zoning process without C-1 uses at R-150 density if properties that are located on Hectic Hill Lane are developed. This would require rezoning.
3. It is not recommended that an individual neighborhood plan be prepared at this time because there are no major land use issues to be considered other than the possible development of Lakewood Country Club which is covered in the Land Use Chapter.





## PLANNING AREA 17

### KING FARM NEIGHBORHOOD

#### INTRODUCTION

King Farm is a 440-acre area located between Frederick Road (Route 355), West Gude Drive, Shady Grove Road, and I-270. The residential neighborhoods are east of Gaither Road. The area was annexed into the City in 1995. The area is zoned O-3 and is being developed as a comprehensive planned development.

King Farm is a neo-traditional neighborhood designed with a grid street pattern and a mixture of uses and housing types incorporated into the design. The neighborhood accommodates multi-modal transportation needs with sidewalks, bikeways, and a connection to the Metro system. Its design and success have received national attention in the planning and development fields. When completed, there will be 3,200 residential units – 1,570 attached and detached single family units and 1,630 multi family units. The development also includes over 3,000,000 sq. ft. of office space and 125,000 sq. ft. of retail space.

Over 1,000 families already live in King Farm in a mixture of housing styles. The neighborhood is also served by the King Farm Village Center retail area located within walking distance to most residents. A number of multi-family dwellings are integrated into the design of this center. There are over 50 acres in open space (although some of the area will be used for stormwater management) and 40 acres that will be reserved as two potential school sites. The former King Farm residence and barns are to be saved as part of the City's park. In addition, King Farm also has private open spaces in the form of pocket parks and civic open spaces such as Pleasant Circle.

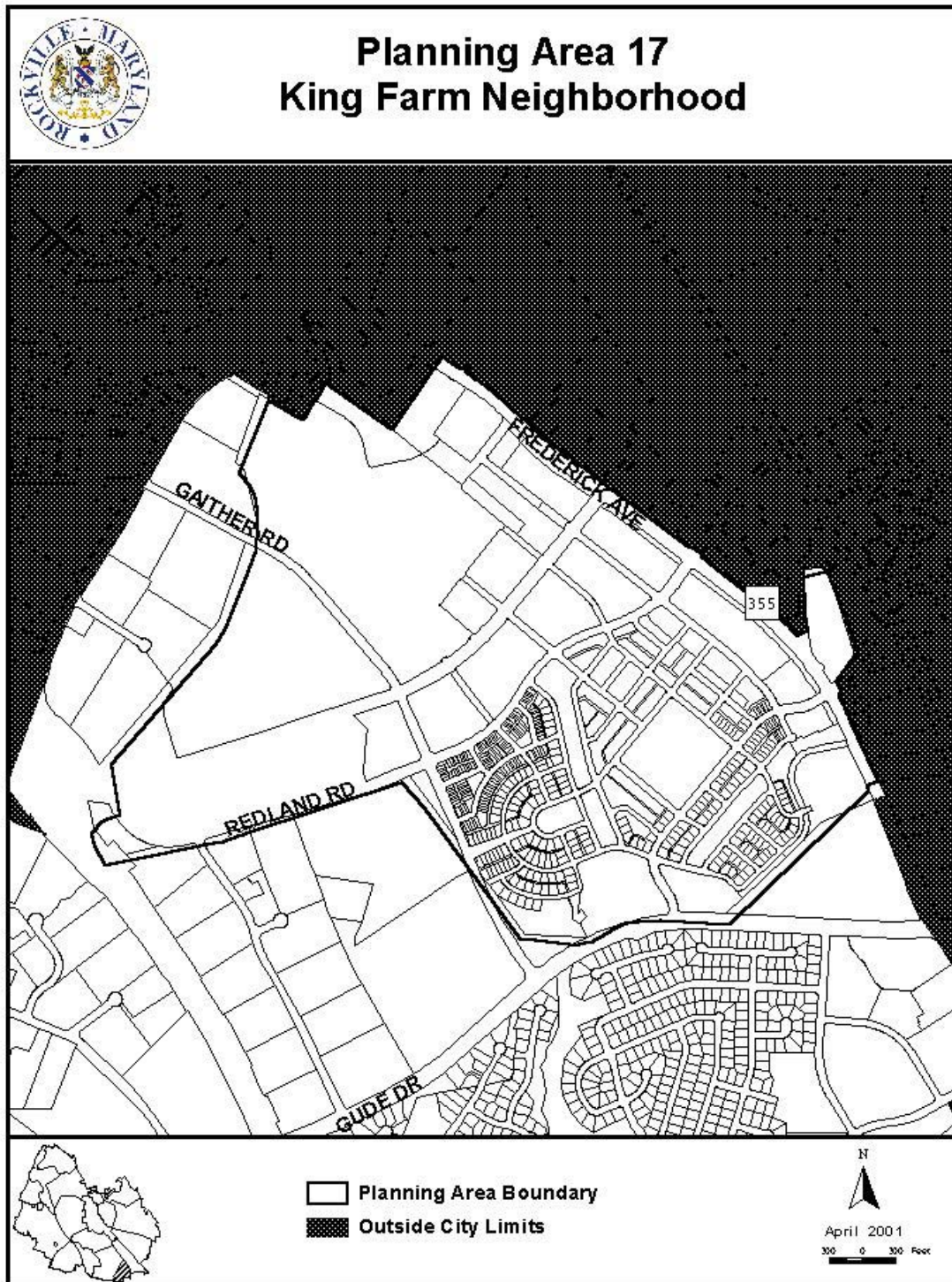
The nonresidential portion of the development that is devoted to office uses will be located in the Research/Piccard/King Farm/Fallsgrove Neighborhood (Planning Area 15). Although the King Farm development is contained in two planning areas, it is designed to function as a whole.

#### Recommendations

1. Follow the concept plan as detailed applications are submitted for approval.







## **PLANNING AREA 18**

### **FALLSGROVE NEIGHBORHOOD**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The Fallsgrove development is located in the northwestern section of Rockville. Located on the former Thomas Farm, the site consists of 254 acres bounded by Shady Grove Road, Darnestown Road, West Montgomery Avenue and Research Boulevard. This property was annexed in 1993. In February 2000, the Mayor and Council approved a concept plan for the property to be developed as a Comprehensive Planned Development. This plan authorized 1,530 dwelling units, 150,000 square feet of retail and 950,000 square feet of office/research and development space. The site plan also includes 86.7 acres of open space including sites for a community center and a school. The dwelling units are divided between single-family attached and detached homes, stacked townhouses, and multifamily apartments.

The retail Village Center is planned for an eleven-acre area along Shady Grove Road. The concept plan calls for the retail area to be pedestrian oriented with access from the adjoining residential neighborhood as well as the employment centers located near the Life Sciences Center. However, the retail area is not intended to be a regional shopping center, and the size of the stores has been limited.

The office component of the development will be located between Research Boulevard and West Montgomery Avenue. In addition, there will be office use on the Shady Grove Road frontage adjacent to the existing office use on Shady Grove Road. The 950,000 square feet of office space is to be divided evenly between office and research and development. The office area along Shady Grove Road is designed so that it relates to the retail center as well as uses across Shady Grove Road and Research Boulevard.

The nonresidential portion of the development that is devoted to retail, office, and research and development uses will be located in the Research/Piccard/King Farm/Fallsgrove Neighborhood (Planning Area 15).

#### **Recommendations**

1. Follow the concept plan as detailed development applications are submitted.

